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# NARRATIVE

OF THE

# Expedition to South America,

WHICH SAILED FROM ENGLAND

AT THE CLOSE OF 1817.

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# NARRATIVE

OF THE

# Expedition

TO

# SOUTH AMERICA,

WHICH SAILED FROM ENGLAND

AT THE CLOSE OF 1817,

FOR THE

## SERVICE OF THE SPANISH PATRIOTS:

INCLUDING THE

## MILITARY AND NAVAL TRANSACTIONS,

AND ULTIMATE FATE OF THAT EXPEDITION:

ALSO THE

## ARRIVAL OF COLONELS BLOSSET AND ENGLISH,

WITH BRITISH TROOPS FOR THAT SERVICE,

THEIR RECEPTION AND SUBSEQUENT PROCEEDINGS, WITH

OTHER INTERESTING OCCURRENCES.


BY C. BROWN,

*Late Captain of the Venezuelian Brigade of Light Artillery,*

WHO RETURNED TO HIS NATIVE COUNTRY, JUNE 29, 1819.



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# PREFACE.

IN offering this Work to the Public, the Author has to observe, that his object has been to relate a plain Narrative of Facts, for the consideration of all who are interested in the affairs of Spanish America, and for the particular information of those who may have conceived the intention of joining the standard of the Independents. He feels it a duty which he owes to his Countrymen, to exert his humble efforts for the purpose of preventing them, by all the means in his power, from precipitating themselves into that misery from which, after a tedious period of sufferings, he has succeeded in extricating himself. Such being his motives to the composition of this Narrative, he trusts that it will meet with lenient criticism.

# NARRATIVE,

*&c. &c.*

BEING in London in the month of July, 1817, and hearing of the liberal offers held out to young men whose enthusiasm or necessities might tempt them to join the standard of Liberty then unfurled in the plains of the New World, in an unlucky hour I resolved to contribute my feeble efforts towards the emancipation of an oppressed, and, as I then imagined, a deserving people. I had the good fortune to meet with a very able British officer, who was then exerting himself in forming a brigade of foot artillery, to consist of five light six-pounders, one 5½ inch howitzer, a suitable number of officers, and ninety men, including non-commissioned officers. I was admitted into this establishment with the rank of second lieutenant, and received orders to hold myself in readiness to embark

at a week's notice. The interval before sailing was sufficiently employed in endeavouring to qualify myself for the scientific and respectable post of an artillery officer, which, with the equipment I was directed to procure, led me into considerable expense. We embarked at Gravesend, on the 2d of December, on board the ship Britannia, Captain Sharp. As the events of the voyage, together with many other particulars, have been related by my brother officer, Lieutenant Halkett, and a recapitulation of them would be unnecessary, I shall proceed to a detail of those that occurred after he relinquished the expedition.

The brigade having been disbanded, because our dispatches to General Bolivar were not acknowledged, though forwarded at considerable danger and expense, to the patriot army, then about eight hundred miles up the river Orinoco, I was left destitute in a part of the world to which I was an utter stranger; and my only resource was to join Colonel Campbell's corps of rifle, who, I understood, were resolved to prosecute their voyage at all hazards. Having prevailed upon twenty of

our brigade to accompany me, I embarked with them on board the Dowson, where I experienced the kindest reception from the officers. The intention of the Colonel, we were informed, was to return to the island of St. Bartholomew's, in order to procure some small vessels to transport us up the Orinoco; but from deficiency of provisions and water, we were obliged to put into the Danish island of Santa Cruz, having fallen so far to leeward of St. Bartholomew, as made us despair of being able to beat up again. Colonel C—— now called a meeting of the officers, and informed us, that on maturely considering the dangerous state of affairs on the Spanish main, he had abandoned the intention of proceeding to our original destination; but if we would still confide and continue under his command, he would lead us to a country in which, though he was not then at liberty to divulge its name, we should, in a short time, be amply compensated for all our disappointments. He proposed that those officers who were still willing to remain with him should insert their names in a paper produced for that purpose. I declined, as did

many others, the condition of binding myself to follow the fortunes of Colonel C—— wherever he might be induced to lead, and was once more thrown into a very embarrassing situation. I could now remain no longer on board the Dowson, and it was necessary that I should be prompt in resolving what course to take. Fortunately, I possessed a letter of introduction to a gentleman in the island of St. Thomas, whither I determined, on the first opportunity, to proceed. There was at this time a small sloop in the harbour, which was to sail in the evening for that place, and I agreed with the Captain of her for the sum of eight dollars, for the security of which I was to leave my baggage on board. We got under weigh about eight o'clock, and arrived at the above-mentioned place in the afternoon of the ensuing day. I was agreeably surprised at meeting with Colonel Gillmore, who, it appears, had been formerly stationed here during the time it was under the British flag, and was consequently well acquainted with the place. His intention, as well as my own, was to return home, for which purpose I took my departure in a vessel that was bound to the

Dutch settlement of St. Eustace, where, I was informed, I should meet with daily opportunities of getting to St. Kitt's. My motive for going to this place was to apply to his Excellency Governor Probyn for assistance, in order to facilitate my passage to my native country, having heard that he had afforded the means to many young men who had embarked in this unfortunate expedition. I was unavoidably detained at St. Eustace three days in consequence of the bad weather, which prevented the small craft that traded to St. Kitt's from getting out of the bay. At length it moderated, and I fixed upon the ensuing morning for proceeding, but was unexpectedly prevented. Three sails were observed in the offing very early, beating in under French, Dutch, and Spanish colours, from one of which a boat put off and gained the land, when an American Captain, with whom I then was, recognized in one of the persons that stepped on shore from her, Admiral Bryon, who had at last arrived in the West Indies from the province of Old Guyana, in South America, with two brigs and a schooner, laden with mules, in order to sell

them, and, in return, purchase provisions, arms, and powder, of which they stood in the greatest need on the main. During the time they were landing them, I waited upon Bryon, and informed him that I was one of Colonel Gillmore's officers, but that in consequence of General Bolivar's neglect of our dispatches, and of the importunity manifested by the Captain and Supercargo, that we should quit the Britannia, he had been obliged to resign his command; and that the officers and men were now dispersed in the Islands, with the exception of those whom I had taken on board the Dowson, and a few who joined Colonel Wilson's corps. After a long conversation, he stated, that upon receipt of our letters for instructions, he had been dispatched, as soon as possible, but that owing to some misfortunes in the Orinoco, he had been detained longer than was expected; adding, that his present intention was to make all possible haste to St. Bartholomew's, in order to look for the Dowson. He then presented for my perusal a printed proclamation, wherein great promises were held out to us upon our arrival at Angostura, then the head-

quarters of the Independents. As I had still a wish to proceed to the main (not crediting implicitly the accounts I had heard respecting the wretched state of affairs there), this information silenced all my scruples, and I consented to embark on board the Condor. Bryon then said he would hire a small vessel to convey me again to St. Thomas, in order to solicit the Colonel to resume his command, promising to collect his scattered brigade, and enter into an agreement for the light artillery and cargo of the Britannia, provided she had not left the West Indies. I therefore went on board in the evening with him, when we immediately weighed anchor. The officers belonging to the Condor were North Americans, with the exception of the Captain, who was a Spaniard. The crew was entirely composed of Indians, nearly naked, wearing only a small piece of coarse cloth or bunting tied round their waist. They exhibited a wild and savage appearance, and, from their extreme uncleanliness, were continually afflicted with ulcers.

On our arrival off St. Bartholomew's, we

cleared for action, hoisted the Independent flag, and gave chase to a fine schooner that was cruizing off there. I had given the Admiral information concerning the person styling himself General Hudson, who had been endeavouring to prevail on the Colonels commanding the different corps to relinquish all thoughts of proceeding to their original destination, and to place themselves under his directions, with the assurance that he would lead them where their fortunes would be soon made, and was now at St. Bartholomew's, making arrangements with one of the Commanders. This intelligence induced Bryon to keep a good look-out, as we approached the land, and as the vessel just mentioned appeared desirous of avoiding us, a suspicion arose that she might be concerned with him. After a short chase we came up with her, and ordered the Captain to come on board. The threats that were used, together with a promise to allow him to pass unmolested, provided he gave us the desired information (as it now appeared evident that he knew Hudson), induced him to confess that he was then lying

off and on the island for him, in order to go to St. Thomas to complete his preparations for the expedition he had in view.

If Hudson had then been on board the schooner, he would shortly have made his exit from this world, as Bryon swore he would hang him up on the yard as soon as he should have him in his power, and I am convinced he would at that time have taken great pleasure in being able to execute his threat. It appears that that adventurer had been some time employed in the Independent cause in the character of interpreter, and had been entrusted with the sum of five hundred dollars, which had been raised with considerable difficulty, for the purpose of purchasing certain necessaries that were greatly wanted, from some of the West-India Islands; but on his arrival in the Colonies, he had turned pirate, and would, as the Admiral gave us to understand, have delivered up to the Royalists all those whom he might have prevailed upon to join him.

We now perceived a large ship to leeward of us, which I imagined to be the Britannia. As we approached nearer I was convinced,

and we immediately stood towards her. Mr. Ritchie, the Supercargo, shortly arrived on board, and informed us that he had long since given up all thoughts of hearing from the Main, and was then going to St. Domingo to offer the cargo to King Christophe; he would, however, bring the ship to an anchor in St. Bartholomew's (which they had just quitted), and could then make what arrangements the Admiral might wish. Our colours were perceived shortly after by the Emerald (then at anchor in the harbour), and a boat soon put off from her with Mr. D——, the Supercargo, and the Captain; the former gentleman had effected a passage up the Orinoco, in company with some of Colonel Hippesly's officers from Granada, and had returned with Admiral Bryon to St. Eustace, from whence he had taken a small passage-boat to St. Bartholomew's, and had arrived a few hours before us, in time to frustrate Hudson's expedition. We now brought up in a place called Five Islands, distant three leagues from the above-mentioned harbour. Bryon then left us, and, accompanied by the gentleman who had arrived on board, proceeded to the

Emerald, which he intended to make his flag ship.

As the vessel which was to convey me to St. Thomas would not arrive until late in the day, I resolved upon a ramble on shore, and for that purpose went with two of the Indians, who took their muskets with them in order to look for some wild goats, with which most of the uninhabited islands abound. As soon as we landed I left my sombre companions and walked leisurely along the sand, that I might view the extent of the island. Its situation is wild and dreary, being a continued range of high mountains; its greatest length could not exceed a mile, and its breadth half a mile. The bay is well sheltered from wind, but owing to the position of some rocks, there is generally a heavy sea in shore; and in the hurricane months of August, September, and October, this must be a terrific and dreadful spot. The reader will here pardon a short digression from my narrative, for the purpose of relating an adventure which may not prove uninteresting. I continued my walk upon the sand, until my progress was interrupted

by a rock projecting into the sea, which obliged me to turn into a small valley, between two of the largest mountains. My attention was here unexpectedly arrested by the appearance of a venerable old man, who was cultivating a piece of ground at a short distance; he was habited in a thin pair of dark fustian trowsers, a short coarse frock, and a large white hat, which shaded his wrinkled forehead from the scorching sun: he was so intent upon his occupation, that it was not till he was alarmed by the report of one of the muskets of the Indians, (who were on the hill above us) that he perceived me nearly at his side. His first emotions were those of distrust and surprise, which I endeavoured to calm by explaining the cause of our being here; but as he seemed to have only a slight and imperfect knowledge of the English tongue, I addressed him in French: a gleam of pleasure animated his sallow and sun-burnt visage on hearing himself addressed in what was evidently his native language, and he invited me to enter his habitation, which was concealed by a hill a few yards from us. It was built with mud

and stones, and had two small apartments, one of which contained his bed, two or three old muskets and a rusty sword; on a table near a small aperture in the wall, which was the only window, stood a large wooden crucifix, and before it lay a religious book, open. The other apartment served as a repository for his implements of husbandry, and his provisions, chiefly dried fish, two barrels of flour, and a cask with water. I delicately expressed my astonishment at finding an inhabitant in so remote and solitary a situation, who must evidently experience many difficulties from the precarious supply of water and provision from St. Bartholomew: he replied that my surprise would cease when he explained to me the manner in which he lived, where he did not depend on the adjacent islands, except for those articles of luxury which he could easily dispense with. He then led me to a tank* or cistern, built of brick, and capable of containing several puncheons of water: this

* The dependence in most parts of the West Indies for water, is on that which they catch in these cisterns during the rainy season, when they are soon filled.

he said was erected at the expense of his son, then harbour-master of St. Barthomew's. His little island abounded with fish, and sometimes turtle; "thus," said he, "I am abundantly supplied with the principal necessaries of life; the rest, which are luxuries, I frequently receive from my son: the few animals I brought here, have multiplied so fast, that I have now more than sufficient. I have been an inhabitant of this place eleven years, five of which I have been entirely alone. A faithful black who attended me in my seclusion from mankind, died of the fever about the above period; since which, being blessed with health and strength, I have performed those offices for myself in which he was wont to assist me." On a subsequent visit to this island about a month afterwards, I went on shore to see this recluse, having a strong desire to penetrate the motives of the old man for thus secluding himself in so strange a manner from the world.

I immediately repaired to his habitation, and was upon the point of entering, when I perceived him kneeling before his crucifix, earnestly engaged in prayer: I would have

retired, but he at that instant arose and devoutly crossing himself, entered the apartment, at the threshold of which I was standing, lost in thought respecting this unaccountable character; he advanced towards me, shook me cordially by the hand, and after some enquiries on my part if his tranquillity had been interrupted by the vessels we had left there, or if his property had been in any way injured by them, he asked the reason of my return. I replied, that we had been cruizing until the rest of the fleet were ready, that we might proceed in a body to the main. I named several of the islands I had seen since my arrival in the West Indies, and amongst others spoke of Guadaloupe and Martinique. At the mention of these islands he appeared much agitated, but recovering himself, he said, "you have, by bringing to my mind those two places, renewed in me an inquietude that I had hoped eleven years of seclusion from the world would have alleviated, but the recollection of past events is unpleasant to me." He then hastily quitted me, apparently in great trepidation, and from that time studiously avoided all communica-

tion.* I afterwards learnt that he was supposed to have been an actor in some tragic scenes that occurred at Martinique and Guadaloupe during the Revolution, and his imagination being painfully alive to events that he would fain obliterate from his memory, he had at last voluntarily secluded himself from the world.

I must now return to my narrative, from which I have too long deviated. The hour approached in which I might expect the vessel that was to convey me to St. Thomas, consequently I returned on board the Condor, where I awaited its arrival only a short time; we had a favourable passage, and came to anchor in the harbour, forty-eight hours after we had left Five Islands. I immediately waited upon my Colonel, and delivered to him the papers I had received from Bryon: he was, however, for some time unresolved, and until the next day, did not consent to return with me to St. Bartholomew's. The little vessel on board of which we embarked, had

* This may appear a romantic and improbable story, but it is a fact well known in St. Bartholomew's and adjacent islands.

been built for the purpose of transporting cattle from one island to another, and had barely sufficient room for two oxen; she had a small cabin that contained two bed places, which were allotted to the Colonel and myself; they were so small that it was with difficulty I could get in by lying down and working in by degrees. We had provision for four days, and considered it next to impossible that we could be longer on the passage, the distance being about eighty miles, and the vessel of such a description that we could lay our course very near to the wind. The first two days we got on tolerably, but on the third, fourth, fifth, and sixth, we were becalmed; our provisions began now to fail us, and our water, through the negligence of the Captain of the boat, in not purchasing a sufficient quantity, was nearly exhausted, which compelled us to use it very sparingly, restricting ourselves to a pint and half a day. We had still two or three bottles of claret, which enabled us to support it better; but from the impossibility of staying below, where we could not sit upright, we were obliged to remain on the deck, exposed to the burning heat of a

vertical sun, which, from the scarcity of any liquid, became extremely torturing. We endeavoured to catch some fish, and at last succeeded in drawing up a large dolphin, which, in the torments of death, underwent at every moment a change of the most beautiful and vivid colours. This was a most seasonable support, as it provided us with the means of making several good meals, though in one respect it hardly compensated for the excessive thirst it created. The next day a brisk gale sprung up, which in thirty hours carried us into the harbour of St. Bartholomew. We had in vain endeavoured to effect a landing on the island of Sabia in the night, for the purpose of getting water, our supply being now entirely exhausted; but we had no small boat, and were afraid of going too close to the land. On our arrival, I received orders to proceed on board the Victoria, Bryon's flag ship, (late Emerald,) the Colonel intending to remain on shore until the Patriot fleet should be ready to put to sea. The principal part of Colonel C——'s corps, with the band, had already embarked to give their assistance in mounting

her guns, (which comprised part of the cargo of the Britannia,) as we were ordered out of the harbour within a limited time, in consequence of some unpleasant occurrence, and because the Admiral had been prohibited from going on shore. It may be necessary to relate that the ship Emerald, after her arrival in the West Indies, had during the time that Colonel Hippesley's Hussars * were on board, been too busy with a Spanish vessel, that was brought into St. Bartholomew's by a privateer; and strict orders were issued by Admiral Harvey, commanding the Barbadoes station, to the British men of war, to seize her wherever they might meet her. From this circumstance she was unable to return home, and afraid to put to sea; therefore they were glad to dispose of her, as the only way of eluding the seizure.

The day after I had arrived, we weighed anchor: and when we had been at sea about eight hours, the hands were turned up: the Independent colours, with the Admiral's flag, were then hoisted amid martial music, three

* This corps left the Emerald at St. Lucie, and proceeded in a brig, named the Tiger, up the Orinoco.

cheers, and the firing of a gun, Bryon was now congratulated by all the officers in succession, and success was drank to the cause; but, in the midst of our conviviality, a large sail was discovered bearing down upon us before the wind with all her * studding-sails set, and we being under easy sail, she gained fast upon us: Bryon therefore resolved to change our course as soon as it was dark, in order to avoid any thing unpleasant, should she be a British man of war. We soon after went below into the ward-room, and continued to make ourselves merry until ten o'clock, when we retired to our hammocks; at eleven, we were aroused by the sound of the bugle calling to quarters. We immediately hurried on our clothes, seized our swords, and hastened on deck, where it appeared that our pursuers had managed to keep us in view, by the assistance of night-glasses, and were now in full chase. All was bustle on board, owing to the unprepared state for encountering the

* These are used when a ship is going free, being additional sails made fast to a spar run out at the extremity of the yards.

strange vessel, should she be a Spaniard. I received orders to superintend the charging of the guns; and cases of pistols were hastily broken open, loaded, and distributed to the men; the soldiers' wives behaved most gallantly, employing themselves in handing the shot up out of the hold, which, as the guns were of a variety of calibres, made terrible confusion: we crowded all sail, hoping still to get clear, and in an hour were in some sort of order. We were then allowed to go below. At one o'clock the bugle again sounded, and every man was instantly at his station. We could now perceive the ship at about a quarter of a mile distance, and it being useless to think of getting away, a lantern was placed at each gun, the * courses hauled up, and the main topsail backed. She soon came along-side, and we hailed, demanding what ship? They answered, His Britannic Majesty's Sloop of War, Brazen; and, in return, requested our name; we replied, The Venezuelian Republic Sloop of War, Victoria, Admiral Bryon. A Lieute-

* A term given to the fore and mainsail, being the largest sails in a ship.

nant now came alongside in the launch, well manned, and was saluted by the soldiers, who were ranged in order near the gangway, that we might present as formidable an appearance as possible, and prevent him from seeing the hurried manner in which we had secured our guns, which could not have stood more than one broadside. He was ushered below, and communicated the instructions which Captain S—— had received from Admiral Harvey, to bring the ship Emerald into Barbadoes, if he should meet with her. Bryon contended that she was now the Venezuelian Ship Victoria, he having purchased her, and was therefore resolved to defend her to the last. This answer was accordingly carried to Captain S——, by the officer, who returned in about a quarter of an hour with a letter to Admiral Bryon, who was requested to accompany the Brazen to Barbadoes, where the affair might be arranged. He immediately dictated an answer, with the purport of which I am not acquainted; but he declared he would sooner blow up the ship, and a train was actually laid in the magazine for that purpose, in case of extremity. His Aid-de-Camp, Colonel

J——, was the bearer of this letter, the Lieutenant remaining on board, and strict injunctions were given to the men to hold no conversation with the Brazen's boat crew, or allow any of them to come up the side. The time of Colonel J——'s absence was passed by us in the greatest anxiety and suspense. This was a most unpleasant affair to be any way engaged in, yet I, with many others, had resolved not to give our assistance to the firing of a single shot against our countrymen, although obliged to keep up the appearance of a determination to defend our flag. As soon as Colonel J—— had pushed off from the Brazen, she piped all hands to quarters, and we fully expected a broadside as soon as the officer should be returned to his ship. However, more letters passed, and we had the satisfaction to see her put about, after we had been nearly alongside each other for four hours. It was of now day-break, and we perceived that we were close to the island of Sabia, which is under the jurisdiction of St. Eustace. It is of an immense height, the summit of the mountains being constantly enveloped in the clouds: the inhabitants are prin-

cipally white people, and it is considered the most healthy spot in the West Indies. After cruizing a few days, we came to an anchor in Five Islands, where we remained about six weeks, going out sometimes in the evening to look for a prize, and returning the next morning. During this time, the fleet, consisting of three brigs and a schooner, were employed in making every thing ready for a long voyage. The Governor of St. Bartholomew's imposed a fine of sixteen dollars upon all persons who might attempt any communication with us. This prohibition, however, we could avoid, by taking out a passport for the island of St. Martin's, distant four leagues from us. On our return from one of our night cruizes, we found that a beautiful two-topsail schooner, under the Buenos Ayres colours, had come to anchor in Five Islands, and in consequence of the information we received of her proceedings at sea, from some men who had left her to join our fleet, it was determined to make her a prize. Previous to this, an officer was dispatched on board to desire the Captain to repair to the flag-ship with his commission. It was then found he had de-

camped early in the morning in an open boat, with several small boxes of doubloons and dollars, suspecting our hostile intentions; the bugle was now ordered to sound to quarters, a spring put on our cable, and our broadside brought to bear upon her. I was appointed to the command of the first four guns on the quarter-deck, and every officer had his station allotted to him; a boarding party was picked out of Colonel C——'s corps, consisting of thirty men and two officers, who were directed, should they meet with resistance, to get out of the way, that we might pour in our shot upon her.

Every thing was now ready, the boats left the ship, and got on board without appearing to meet with any opposition. The Admiral was then standing close by me, when we perceived several men getting up the rigging, with an intention, as was thought, to loose the sails and run out. He immediately ordered me to elevate an eighteen-pound carronade to bear upon the tops and fire. Fortunately the shot passed between the shrouds and yard, without doing any other injury than alarming the men, who precipitately retreated to

the deck. This proceeding was likely to have produced more fatal consequences; for it was considered as a signal to the rest, and five guns were discharged before the word of command could be heard. We then discovered that our own men, on getting on board, had gone up with the intention of cutting away the sails, to prevent any means of escape. Her crew were one hundred in number, including officers, principally North Americans, seventy of whom were brought prisoners on board the Victoria. As a great part of our men were left as a guard on board the Ceripo (the name of our prize), we were under the necessity of confining these men in the fore hold, allowing two to come on deck at a time to breathe the fresh air; six sentinels were on the alert; two of them keeping the muzzles of their muskets pointed down the hatchway amongst them, in case they should attempt their escape, from a consciousness of being more numerous than ourselves. It was now my guard, when the poor fellows, unable longer to bear the oppressive heat, sent one of their comrades to supplicate that a few more might be allowed on deck. I

communicated their request to Colonel C——, who accompanied me into the place of their confinement, in order to see if it was absolutely necessary; but we were glad to make a precipitate retreat, for the heat was so intense, and the steam of their breath so offensive, that I am positive they could not have supported it much longer: ten were now allowed egress for the space of ten minutes, which alleviated their torture a little, and we supplied them plentifully with water.

This severe treatment was requisite, as they were all of the most desperate character, and imagined that they would be sent to some British island to take their trials as pirates; consequently the utmost precaution was necessary on our part for the preservation of our safety. The next day the officers were examined, and one of them having accepted a commission under the Venezuela flag, gave a a circumstantial detail of all their proceedings; from which it appeared, they had sailed under Buenos-Ayres and Artigas colours (two opposite parties), and had indiscriminately made prize of all vessels likely to prove lucrative, that fell in their way. Ten of her

men were detained as a matter of form to condemn her; a few others entered their names on the ship's books, for the term of six months; and the rest were put on shore, and sent to St. Bartholomew's. Nothing particular now occurred for the space of a month, excepting the arrival of Aury, a Frenchman, and self-created Admiral of the Mexican cause. His force consisted of two brigs, mounting each two long pivot guns and eight side guns: the Buenos-Ayres brig, the San Martin, mounting sixteen guns and one hundred and twenty men, likewise put in, for the purpose of reclaiming our prize, the Ceripo (now named the Spartan), as a Buenos-Ayres cruizer, but without success.

The Venezuelan fleet now began to prepare for putting to sea, and my Colonel repaired on board the Victoria; our departure was unexpectedly hastened by intelligence received one morning from Aury (who had been cruizing during the night), that the Spanish fleet was then a few leagues distant, on the other side of the island: a fast-sailing schooner was instantly dispatched to reconnoitre, and returned with the account that

the fleet was then about twelve miles to windward of us. The hands were called up, and a general signal made to weigh. Two of the vessels were obliged to cut their anchors adrift, not being able to get them up, having so few men on board and so little time to spare: the Victoria was the first outside; the rest passed in order under our stern to receive their instructions. The Dowson had been ordered from St. Bartholomew's some days previous: her signal was now made, and she was directed to make the best of her way to St. Martin's, having a few men and the greater part of the officers of Colonel C——'s corps still on board: on passing across our stern they gave us three cheers, and gallantly volunteered their service in the fleet; consequently three or four of the officers were received on board the Victoria, and the rest were sent to the Spartan. The Royalist force were now plainly discernible, amounting in all to eight sail, as follows: a clumsy forty-four gun frigate, the Nymph corvette, mounting thirty long eighteen-pounders, three large brigs, two schooners, and a sloop carrying a heavy pivot gun.

The Patriot fleet, including our allies, were: The Victoria, twenty-two guns, Aury's two brigs, the San Martin, Orinoco, ten guns, two of which were on a pivot, the Indian Libre, twelve guns, and the Spartan.

Bryon's first intention was, in conjunction with the San Martin, to have laid the Victoria alongside the Nymph, she being the most formidable; the rest were to act as circumstances might demand: but, upon second consideration, it was determined, as soon as the adverse fleet should come up, to close with them, as the only chance of success was to abandon our own ships and seek a speedy victory or death on board of theirs. The adjacent hills of St. Bartholomew were covered with people, waiting to behold this contention for freedom. The Independent colours, with the Admiral's flag, were nailed to the mast, and a train laid in the magazine, it being resolved to blow up both ourselves and enemies, rather than yield and incur an ignominious death, to be inflicted in all its horrors.

They approached but slowly, showing no great desire of bringing us to an engagement, as they set only their topsails: had they been

so disposed, they might have come up with us in an hour and a half; therefore, after laying-to for them two hours, it being impossible for us, from their situation so far to windward, to compel them to engage us, we made sail, hoping to draw them down to the Mona passage, near St. Domingo, where Aury expected to meet with some of his privateers, which would enable us to give them battle upon more equal terms.

As soon as they perceived us stand away from them, they crowded all their canvas, and gave chase: the corvette so far outsailed the rest, that she was near cutting off one of our brigs, which obliged us to shorten sail; she followed our example; for, had she continued the chase, she must, in her turn, have been separated from the squadron.

This fine vessel had been built in the United States for the service of the Patriots; but they were not able to pay for her, and she was purchased by the Royalists. While in their possession, she will remain a terror and scourge to the Independent fleet, being a remarkably fast-sailing ship. They kept up the chase during the night; but, towards morn-

ing, we lost sight of them, and continued our passage to Mona, where we arrived in two days, and came to an anchor close to that uninhabited island. Here, as we expected, we found three small vessels; but they were not equivalent to the loss we sustained from the San Martin, who left us to continue her cruize. We were now in hourly expectation of the arrival of the enemy; and that we might have timely notice, we kept two schooners constantly on the alert near the island.

The day after our arrival, a party was proposed to go on shore in order to hunt the wild bullocks, with which we were given to understand the place abounded. Twenty of us, armed with muskets and bayonets, set out at nine o'clock in the morning and effected a landing with great difficulty, owing to the shallows and rocks which extended near a mile from the shore, so as to oblige us to walk near two hundred yards in the water to gain the land. This island is near twenty miles in circumference, and is covered entirely with almost impenetrable woods, having here and there a small spot of grass, which suddenly

bursts upon the sight on emerging from the underwood; it is in these open places, some of which contain a dirty spring of warm water, that the wild cattle are usually to be met with.

We now pursued our way into the interior, and traced them by their bellowing to a considerable distance; but in the ardour of the chase, we neglected to take that notice of objects which would have facilitated our return. Our thirst became excessive; and having fortunately found a spring, we halted and fired a volley to let our straggling companions know where we were. We now refreshed ourselves by mixing a small quantity of spirits with the water, and again separated into two parties, in order to hunt on our way back. Calculating from the time we had been on shore, we judged that we were now about six miles distant from the point of landing, and therefore did not doubt of being able to reach it early enough to be on board to dinner at two o'clock.

After traversing the wood for some time, we suspected that we must have come by a different route from the one we were now pur-

suing. Not a breath of air was stirring, otherwise we could have ascertained the situation of the sea, as the wind in those latitudes blows constantly from one quarter.. We were now so buried in the wood, that it was with difficulty we could respire; the farther we advanced, the more alarming was our situation: in vain we climbed the most lofty trees; nothing was to be seen but an immeasurable space covered with wood; and our thirst became so great, that we suffered the most excruciating torture, and would have gladly given all we possessed for a mouthful of water from the most stagnant pool. A French doctor, belonging to the Spartan, was the first that gave up, and in the utmost despair, desired us to leave him to his fate, for he could not proceed a step farther: we used every argument to persuade him that we could not be far from the sea, and should soon arrive on the sand; thus encouraged, he made another effort: we repeatedly fired our muskets, in hopes that if the other party should have gained an opening, they would return our signal; however, no such welcome sound reached our ears,

and we began now to despair of effecting our egress from this dreadful place; and after continuing our uncertain path for two miles, several others declared their inability to proceed. I was just upon the point of making the same confession, when one who had ascended a tree, declared he could see the sea at no great distance; this acted like magic to our drooping spirits, and gave us strength to bear up a little longer, though we afterwards discovered it was done with the kind intention of keeping up our hopes. It certainly had the desired effect; for had we once sat down, it would have been all over, and we must inevitably have perished, as a raging fever was now consuming us. Should any of us have gained the sand, it would have been impossible for them to trace their way back to our assistance. In about half an hour after we had heard the joyful tidings of being near the sea, our ears were saluted by the dashing of the water against the sand, and in a short time we found ourselves upon the shore though at the distance of four miles from our ships; we imprudently ran directly

into the sea, and continued walking in it for two miles: this refreshed us for the time; but it might have proved fatal, and it actually caused a severe indisposition to most of us. On our arrival on board, we found that the other party had been rather more fortunate, having met with water on the way.

A week had now elapsed since our arrival here, and during that time a quarrel took place between Bryon and Aury. The latter had planned an expedition to make a descent on the Spanish Main, in which the junction of the Venezuelan and Mexican flag were necessary to ensure success. A contention arose for the command, in which neither would submit, consequently a separation of the two flags took place, and it was resolved we should steer our course to Margarita, where we arrived in about fourteen days. It was late in the evening when we came to an anchor, and orders were now issued for us to be in readiness to disembark the next morning.

This place is situated in the latitude north 10° 15, and 64 or 65 degrees west longitude.

Being about thirty leagues in circumference, at a distance it has the appearance of two distinct islands, and is connected in the centre by a narrow isthmus nearly upon a level with the sea. The land is remarkably high, and the tops of the mountains are enveloped in clouds. A great part of the island is inhabited by uncivilized Indians, who are supposed to be favourable to the Royalist party: the Patriots would fain dislodge them from this retreat; but their abode is almost impenetrable by land.

In every object that presents itself in Margarita misery is strongly depicted; a few miserable huts were erected on the sand, covered with the boughs of the cocoa-nut and plantain tree. These were the habitations of the people of the higher order; yet the only place to which the name of house could be given was the one to which the General Arismendi invited us, on our landing, to partake of a breakfast, the bread for which was sent from the Victoria, as no such article had been in the island for some months. The greater part of the people, who are of a dark copper colour, live en-

tirely under the manchineel* trees, that extend along the sand, to the branches of which they hang their hammocks; their subsistence depends on their success in fishing, to which occupation they repair early in the morning in canoes. This part of Margarita was formerly a delightful spot, having a beautiful range of cocoa-nut trees to the extent of a quarter of a league, which served to shade the town, when it was razed to the ground by the Spaniards in their last attempt on the island.

During our short stay on this island, the officers lived tolerably, as bread and many other necessaries were sent for us from the Admiral's ship. The soldiers received for their rations a small quantity of bad biscuit and

* This tree is of a most poisonous nature, and is often of the most dangerous consequence to those who, ignorant of its malignancy, take shelter, during a shower, under the branches. The drops that fall from the leaves are so impregnated with the poison, that on whatever part of the body they fall, they cause an excoriation, attended with the most excruciating torture; yet, what is very singular, the natives never suffer any inconvenience from it, being well acquainted with a tree that grows near them, with the leaves of which they rub themselves, and this they say is a most powerful antidote.

fish. During the time the former article was distributing to them, hundreds of the natives would press forward, some of whom would supplicate on their knees for the little morsels that remained in the sack, which always produced a contention and battle amongst them.

From the present state of the island and its inadequacy to support us, it was ordered that we should proceed up the Orinoco, first putting into St. Martin's to make further arrangements with the Britannia and Dowson.

A most malignant yellow fever had raged on board the Victoria from the time we had left Five Islands, and had daily carried off two or three victims. It was therefore considered necessary by the medical officers, to get every thing out of the ship's hold, in order to have it well washed and fumigated. This, with the precaution of leaving the sick on shore, we hoped would effectually drive the sickness away: from our scarcity of water on board the fleet, the Indian Libre and Spartan were dispatched to another part of the island, where there was a spring, in order to procure a sufficiency of this ne-

cessary article. After an absence of two days we were greatly surprised at the return of the captain of the former vessel on foot, with the intelligence that his crew had run away with the brig, during his absence of an hour on shore in the evening. Nothing could exceed the rage of Bryon at this information: but all was in vain; she was gone, and it was useless to send in pursuit of her; in fact the fleet were in so discontented a state, that it was not safe to trust any vessel on a cruize alone. This was the second that had mutinied since I had joined the Admiral. The Condor had been sent from St. Bartholomew, with dispatches to General Arismendi, to inform him of our intention to come to Margarita with arms and other stores for their use; but the crew cut their cable in the night, and steered for the United States.

After a stay of six days at this island we re-embarked and shaped our course for St. Martin's. Notwithstanding the precautions we had taken, the fever again broke out with redoubled fury, and committed greater ravages than ever. Colonel C——'s two sons were amongst the number of the sick, and

the anxiety and attention evinced by their distracted father was truly affecting. Despising all thoughts of the danger to which he exposed himself, he could not be prevailed upon to leave their bed-side a moment, either for nourishment or rest. On our arrival at St. Martin's, in which harbour we anchored under the United States colours, five days from the time of our departure from Margarita, Colonel C—— immediately took a house on shore, in order that his sons might have the best attention and medical assistance; but the fever had now arrived at its crisis, and his eldest son breathed his last in four-and-twenty hours after his landing. Dr. H——* evinced a great nobleness of soul upon this melancholy occasion. He had, from an affair that happened at Margarita, been induced to draw his sword upon his Colonel, which was attended with very unpleasant consequences: I will not pretend to justify him for this unsoldier-like action; but many would, from the reprimand, &c. that

* This gentleman also died of the fever a few months after at St. Bartholomew, were he had obtained a good situation in his profession.

this rashness occasioned, have rejoiced in seeing the afflicted state of him who was the cause of it. Yet, although he had quitted the corps, he generously waved all resentment, attended day and night upon the Colonel's sons, and performed the last sad duties to poor Duncan. This most amiable young man was universally regretted, and followed to the grave by all the military officers then in the fleet. The corpse was first conveyed into the church at Great Bay,* where the Protestant rites were performed with the greatest solemnity, and from thence carried to its last abode; on the coffin being uncovered and lowered into the earth, his brother officers dropped a tear to his memory, and each pressed forward to take a last look of that which contained the remains of their so highly respected friend, who fell a victim to the yellow fever in the eighteenth year of his age. Colonel C—— now resigned his command to Lieutenant-Colonel P——, and with his surviving son embarked for England.

On my return to the Victoria one evening

* This is the principal town of the Dutch settlers in St. Martin's.

from the shore, a few days after our arrival, I was informed by the officer of the watch, that apprehensions were entertained of a mutiny among the sailors that night, their plan being to cut the anchors adrift and run out of the Bay. This report was soon after confirmed by Captain C——, who desired me to muster the artillerymen under my command, and place them in the most advantageous positions on deck, with their muskets presented, to prevent the sailors coming from below. As the conspiracy was entirely on the part of the English sailors, we thought we might trust to the Indians that were on board; consequently we put arms in their hands, and stationed them on the quarter deck: the awning was got down and lanterns placed in different parts, to give us plenty of light; the irons were then placed in readiness, and I was directed to accompany one of the naval officers to order up two men, whose names were mentioned to us. This was not a very pleasant business, as the sailors had got two cases of fire-arms and ammunition out of the hold, which they had distributed amongst

themselves; therefore, after taking the precaution to cock our pistols and draw our swords, we went below, expecting every man we passed to fire at or stab us, as a signal for the rest to rise. On coming into the centre of them, we ordered the two men to come forward, which after a critical pause of a minute they complied with, and were received at the hatchway by the soldiers, who placed their hands and feet in irons, holding a pistol to be discharged if they should utter a single word. We had now to repeat our errand below until we had secured the ringleaders, seven of whom we succeeded in taking; two more had jumped overboard on seeing our first preparations, and most likely became a prey to the sharks, with which all the West-India harbours abound. This put an end to the mutiny; but we were still obliged to remain under arms all night, lest the sailors should attempt to liberate their companions.

We understood in the morning from the Admiral, that he had been apprised of it in a singular manner by a black boy, who slipped a letter into his hand while he was at dinner

with the Governor, the contents of which he had immediately forwarded on board to give us timely notice.

A few things were got out of the Dowson and Britannia; the remainder were to be landed at St. Bartholomew's, and deposited in a secure store until it should be determined by General Bolivar to what place the artillery, &c. should be transported, in order to convey them as far as possible by water.

The Dowson had during the time she was, waiting our return, suffered great damage by lightning, which had shivered her fore-top mast, burnt the tops, and split the mast down to the bottom of her hold. She had also had severe sickness on board, which proved fatal to the soldiers' wives, their husbands having left them, to volunteer against the Spanish fleet.

Having in two days after the intended mutiny completed our arrangements, the signal was made to weigh anchor, and we prepared to take a final farewell of the West Indies. Colonel Gillmore now sent me on shore on duty, expecting that I should have time to get on board again before the anchor

was up; but as soon as I had landed, the boat, which belonged to another vessel, pulled off immediately; they assured me, however that I should not fail of meeting with another when I should have completed the business I came upon.

As the signal for sailing had been made sooner than was expected, many persons belonging to the squadron were on shore; consequently they hurried on board as quickly as possible; and by the time I was ready, to my disappointment I found all the boats had been taken. Being thus compelled to wait their return, I was detained more than half an hour; during which time all excepting the Spartan had got out of the harbour. I succeeded in getting on board this vessel, just as her anchor was up. Several of Colonel Campbell's officers lost their passage; and it would have saved me many months of severe suffering, had I been fortunately one of the number: from this circumstance I could not expect to get on board the Victoria until we should arrive off the Orinoco, and was consequently in great distress for want of a change of linen.

Four or five days after we had quitted St. Martin's, we discovered the signal flying on board the Admiral's ship for the fleet to close, and soon after saw a red flag on the mizen-top-gallant mast head, which is the signal for punishments; on coming up with her, we perceived spars run out at the extremity of the yards, and every thing ready for the mutineers: the colours were then hoisted on board each vessel, and we momentarily expected to see them launched into eternity; but were afterwards informed, that when the ropes were round their necks, their sentence had been changed for that of corporeal punishment and condemnation to the gun-boats in the Orinoco for two years. This was infinitely worse than death, as will appear from a future description of that kind of service.

The Spartan had sprung a leak, and, being heavily laden with stores, fell very much astern of the fleet, and soon lost sight of them. This occasioned us great uneasiness, as we had reason to suspect from the conduct of our crew, who were all Indians, that they had some mischief in view; and from the information obtained by the Captain from

one of the inferior officers, who had overheard their conversation, it was supposed they would seize the first favourable opportunity, on approaching the Spanish Main, to desert the cause, and either massacre all Europeans on board, or carry us prisoners into a Royalist port.

The next evening, being at a considerable distance from the squadron, and in the latitude of the Orinoco, Captain R——, requested that we would be on the alert; for if they did attempt any thing, it would be this night. Accordingly, officers and men to the number of ten armed themselves, two of us remaining on guard, to prevent the Indians coming on the quarter-deck, and to give timely notice. We passed the night rather unpleasantly, from the expectation of being sprung upon by these savages, who, armed with long knives, were four times more numerous than ourselves, and against whom we could have made but a slight resistance: however, I suppose they imagined it would be attended with greater danger to themselves than they had expected; therefore, fortunately for us, they abandoned their villanous project.

The next morning, from the apparent change in the colour of the water, we found we were close to the River Orinoco. We now came up with the rest of the squadron, and, after a few hours sail, began to feel the effects of the rapid current that sets from the river by numberless outlets; this obliged us to come to an anchor, in order to await the return of the tide which flows for the distance of thirty or forty miles up, to a place called Pagia Island. During the time we were at anchor, I got on board the Victoria, where I found that the fever had carried off ten more men, within the last seven days.

As soon as the tide became favourable, we weighed and proceeded a few miles farther, when we again brought up a brig and schooner, being directed to go and ascertain the depth of water on the bar, and also to reconnoitre the river a little way up, in case there should be any enemy's ships concealed in the creeks. From our present anchorage a most curious prospect presented itself, and which, if not well known, would appear incredible; we observed immense forests of mangrove and other trees, extending as far as

the eye can reach in every direction, with their roots sunk at a great depth below the surface of the water. This singular sight to a person on his first arrival in that part of the world, would undoubtedly lead him to expect that he could there place his foot on Terra Firma; but our astonishment was great when we were informed that we were still distant some leagues from any land.

On the return of the vessels from reconnoitring, we were informed that they had found eighteen feet water on the bar, and that the coast was apparently clear of enemies; accordingly we weighed anchor, and got safely over it. Major Graham breathed his last just as we entered the river, after an illness of three days; and the malignancy and infectious nature of the fever was such, as precluded the possibility of keeping his body on board a sufficient time to allow the funeral service to be read over it in the ordinary manner. This officer came out in Colonel Wilson's hussars; but in consequence of some dispute with his commanding officer, he, as well as several others, resigned his commission, and at the time of his decease was second in command under Colonel P——.

We continued our course up the river, and met with a vessel coming down, on board of which was Colonel Hippesley, who had resigned from the service; and Captain Elsham of the 2nd Hussars, who intended returning to England by the first opportunity from some of the Colonies, to raise fresh troops for the Independent cause. Colonel H—— sent a boat on board the Victoria to request the Admiral would, send a little ammunition, as they were given to understand they should most likely meet with some gun-boats of the Royalists near the mouth of the river. They were accordingly supplied with the means of defending themselves, yet assured by Bryon that they had no grounds for apprehension, as we had well reconnoitred the entrance. Towards the close of the second day from the time we had entered the river, we anchored at a small island called Pagia, where the Admiral intended to leave the Victoria and proceed in one of the gun-boats to Angostura, two of which, as he expected, were stationed at this island, and in readiness to receive him.

He said his intention was to send a suffi-

cient number of boats to transport the troops to their destination; but in the mean time gave orders that we should embark on board the Spartan and Favourite schooners, and continue our voyage until we should arrive at the place where he should order the boats to await our coming. The Victoria with two more vessels were to remain at this island, until the return of the Admiral, who was expected in about six weeks; and during this time her guns, &c. were to be got out, and the ship's company to erect temporary huts of their sails on shore, in order that they might paint and clean her thoroughly, and that no means might be left untried to subdue the sickness that raged on board. A little rum and a small quantity of biscuit, barely sufficient for four or five days, were now put on board the schooner for the subsistence of the troops, and we all embarked the next morning.

I must here relate a melancholy accident that occurred the same morning on board this vessel. Mr. C——, a young man who had come out in the Grace, and at this time was acting as Midshipman on board the Spartan,

determined to provide us with a breakfast of fish, which was in great plenty off this island: he continued to be very successful for about half an hour, when a heavy tropical shower came on, which obliged us all to retire from the deck and seek shelter in our little cabin. Unfortunately for him, poor fellow, he was not satisfied with the moderate success he had already met with, and expressed his determination to continue it a few minutes during the shower, in order to treat us with a good feast; he accordingly went and recommenced his fatal occupation. Soon afterwards, Colonel P——, who was then on deck, cried out, 'He is overboard!' We instantly rushed from the cabin to lend our assistance—but to no effect, for he never appeared above water; his hat and pocket-book floated on the surface in about three minutes; but though we immediately dispatched a boat that proceeded down with the current to a great distance, no traces were to be seen of his body. The only way in which we could account for this melancholy accident was, that from his sitting on the rail above the stern posts without any hold, and his having the line round

his wrist, a large fish had suddenly fastened on it, and by a forcible jerk occasioned him to lose his balance. Thus with the rapidity of the current and strength of the fish, he had been forced some depth under water, where he must have become a prey to one of those alligators with which the Orinoco, abounds, and which are always waiting to seize upon any incautious being who may venture to bathe in the river. This young man had gained the esteem of us all during our passage from St. Martin's; and his untimely fate while he was employed in procuring a luxury for our general participation, could not fail to throw a transient gloom of sorrow and regret over our spirits. We parted from the Victoria and the other vessels with three cheers, and finally commenced our voyage for the Independent army. The Favourite parted company with us the same night, at a place where the river branches off in several directions, in order to pursue a nearer route. We were prevented from taking the same course by reason of the greater depth of water which we required, and because the navigation was considerably more difficult.

As the river in that part is narrow, we amused ourselves as we approached the trees, with which both sides are entirely covered, by shooting at the monkeys that were gamboling in the branches. They are of a species but little known, except in South America, being about two feet and a half high, of a deep red colour, with long tails, with which they suspend themselves from the extremities of the branches and drop down from an amazing height upon their prey, consisting chiefly of large insects.

From the intricacy of the navigation, and force of the current, we were obliged to anchor during the night; and in three days arrived at that part of the Orinoco where we might expect to fall in with the gun-boats. It was about four o'clock in the morning when we discovered them paddling towards us; and as they had the current in their favour, they approached with rapidity. On their coming alongside, we were surprised to find that they were manned entirely by wild and savage-looking Indians. The boats, eight in number, were of different sizes, the largest thirty-five feet long and six feet broad, mounting two

short six-pounder guns, and carrying about thirty Indians; the smallest twenty feet long and five broad, mounting one gun, and carrying about thirteen men. They had brought with them a number of small bullocks, and the greater part of this provision was intended for the use of the fleet. However, we received as much as was expected to serve until we should reach the first Indian town, which they said was distant about four days' voyage. About this time the artillery establishment was reduced to fifteen men and four officers, including Colonel G——; and we were distributed in the following manner:—the Colonel, second Lieutenant, and our medical officer, with half of the men, were to go in one of the large boats; I was appointed with the remainder to one of the smallest, which was to carry the baggage, and to my disappointment was ordered for the first baggage guard. Lieutenant-Colonel P—— distributed his small corps to the best advantage, we having only three boats appointed for our service, two continuing their way up a creek to meet the Favourite, and the remainder being detached for the service of the

squadron at Pagia. Our arrangements were soon made, and we left the Spartan, she being still under orders for Angostura with arms, &c.; yet it was not expected that she would effect her passage in less than four weeks, as this was an unfavourable time of the year, and the current of the river was so rapid that a vessel could not stem it without the aid of a brisk gale.

Our remaining small stock of bread and rum was on board the large boat, which we called the head-quarters; and it was agreed that we should halt at stated periods in order to take our frugal meals. Our portion of beef, which had been killed before distribution, we had on board our own boat; it was cut into long pieces about three pounds weight, and a yard long, according to the custom of the Indians. Thus prepared it is hung up in different parts of the boat exposed to the sun, where it shortly putrifies, and in a few days becomes quite dry. Salt was an article at that time too valuable and scarce to be given to us. The first day we kept up with the larger boats, being favoured with a smart breeze, and went alongside the head-

quarters to dinner, where we received a biscuit each, which was all we could expect until the next day; we were likewise advised to be careful, as there was remaining only sufficient for three days, and to make it last that time, would require great economy. The soldiers received their whole allowance at the rate of a biscuit and a half per day, with a fair division of rum. In the same boat with me was an officer of Colonel P——'s, who had the charge of the baggage of that corps, with a small detachment of men: his company was a source of great consolation during a voyage of unprecedented suffering up that tremendous river; for from the time of our embarking on board the gun-boats do I date the commencement of our hardships, which have occasioned the death of many, and considerably impaired my constitution. Unfortunately for us the wind began to die away, and the other boats, from having a greater number of sweepers,* were now con-

* A name given to the Indians, who, with a small paddle about four feet long, propel the boat. They hold this paddle perpendicularly in their hands, immersing it constantly in the water, on which it acts as an oar.

siderably before us, and towards evening we entirely lost sight of them: as we knew that they must halt during the night in case they had no wind, we hoped to come up with them by continuing to row to a late hour. Our efforts were unavailing; for they had got so far a-head, since the wind fell, that there was now no hope of coming up with them. Our situation during the night was very unpleasant; for, it being impossible to bring up the boat in the rapidity of the stream, we were obliged to run her in among the trees and make her fast to them, while the rowers took their repose. For us to sleep was impossible, as we were pestered with millions of musquitoes, that prevented our opening either eyes or mouth, and stung us so severely through our apparel, that we were almost maddened with torture. The Indians were greatly amused to observe the decided preference manifested by these venomous insects to Europeans and new-comers; but our distress was considerably increased, when the tigers and alligators gave us notice that they were at no great distance from us, the former

animals roaring in the most dreadful manner in the woods, and the latter blowing and splashing round our boat, which was not higher than ten inches above the surface of the water. This was a situation so novel to all of us, that it excited in us the greatest apprehensions for our safety. The tiger of South America is rather small, but if possible more ferocious than the royal tiger; and if prompted by long fasting will frequently attack the alligator when it meets it on shore, and the only means the latter has of escaping, is by making a precipitate retreat to its watery abode with its antagonist, who having once fastened on its throat or belly, (the only penetrable place) will not let go his hold. Thus the tiger in turn becomes the prey of this terrible amphibious animal, who after a short struggle drowns him. The Indians when alone in their canoes are very much on their guard against the alligator, who will frequently attack a boat, on observing a probable advantage, and in order to secure its victim, will raise itself cautiously out of the water and place its fore feet on the canoe, which is in-

stantly overset, and the poor Indian quickly meets a most horrible death in the voracious jaws that are open to receive him.

It may be supposed we could not pass a very agreeable night, from our momentary dread of being sprung upon by a tiger from the bank, or taken out of the boat on the other side by an alligator. Never was a reprieve more welcome to a poor wretch at the gallows, than the return of day to us; although we had the gloomy prospect still before us of being obliged to pass many more nights in the same situation, with the aggravation of suffering additional misery from our deficiency of provision, especially as there was no prospect of arriving at any Indian hut or village until it had been long expended. We now cast off our rope from the trees and set forward. The current is so rapid in some places that a man is obliged to swim on shore twenty or thirty times a day, and make his way along the side of the wood to the distance of a hundred yards, in order to make fast a rope to some tree, which is immediately hauled in by those on board. This rapid torrent so often met with during

the day, is occasioned by the abrupt windings and creeks of the river, and by large rocks raised flat and descending gradually to the water. On these places the alligators are generally seen basking in the sun, with their mouths wide open until they are filled with all kinds of insects; the animal then lets fall its upper jaw, as instantaneously as one would shut the lid of a box. The alligators have the appearance of logs of wood, and have been often fatally mistaken; the general size is from eight to thirteen feet, the head and mouth being nearly a fourth of the length of the body. This day we finished the half biscuit we had left, and commenced upon the meat, which had now become much tainted and very offensive. I had a small carbine on board, and my companion a rifle, with which we amused ourselves by firing at the monkeys and parrots that were in great plenty in the trees, and as we were obliged to keep within a few yards of the shore to avoid the strength of the current, we always had a good mark; but not being provided with a small canoe, we could not secure our game. Even with a canoe it would have

been very difficult to find them in the thick underwood into which they must drop.

This night was passed in circumstances equally disagreeable as on the former; and at the return of day-light we again continued our laborious voyage. We were not favoured with a breath of wind, and were therefore obliged to propel the boat by main strength; and this toil so exhausted the Indians, that we were often obliged to take their places for a few hours to let them sleep. They are the most lazy wretches imaginable, and, if not at last forced to resume their labour, would, rather than use any extraordinary exertion, leave the boat to the mercy of the torrent.

This day we experienced some dreadful tropical showers, which wet through every thing we had about us. In order to reserve one dry covering for the night, Lieutenant W—— and myself stood up in the boat with our backs to the rain, and holding a blanket folded up under our coats, wrapped ourselves up in the other, as well as the length of it would admit: this kept the water out for some time; but the rain continuing six hours, we were perfectly soaked through, and

were obliged to have recourse to our last blanket, which was shortly in the same state as the other; yet we hoped that the shower would be over, and we could then dry them in the sun in an hour. To prevent getting wet is of the greatest consequence to Europeans on coming into hot climates, and a negligence of this precaution is generally attended with fatal consequences; as soon as the shower was over, the sun burst out again with the most scorching heat. We took this opportunity of drying our blankets, and got every thing right again for night. We halted two or three times during the day, at the bank or rocks, to dress our miserable victuals, which were now quite putrid. The manner in which we prepared this food was, first to wash it in the river, and having spitted a small piece on a stick, to roast or rather burn it in the fire; we again moistened the meat by dipping it at every mouthful in the water. How acceptable at this moment would have been the hardest crust, and a little salt, to qualify this nauseous meal! Our prospect was now dreadful, for we had still one hundred miles to the first Indian village, and if

we had not more wind than at present, must undoubtedly starve. It rained incessantly during the night; and the musquitoes being thus deprived of the free use of their wings, swarmed from the wood and got under our blankets, where they tortured us to that degree, that our hands were constantly employed in taking them from off our eyes and faces, where they most annoyed us. During our voyage the next day we were overjoyed at discovering a small canoe coming towards us, which was recognised by the Indian captain of our boat, to belong to the Commodore, or largest gun-boat, on board of which was my Colonel; the canoe had only one Indian to guide it, and he brought a slip of paper directed to me from Colonel G——, stating that he was the bearer of a bottle of rum, three biscuits, and a small piece of salt meat, which was what had been saved as the share of Lieutenant W—— and myself; and the Indian informed us, that they were now in a most miserable state on board the other boats.

This supply, though small, was joyfully received by us; and we determined to be very sparing of our three biscuits, dividing one of

them into four parts and making it serve us both a day.

I will pass over many days of severe suffering that we sustained, from the oppressive heat of the sun by day, the continual rains during the night, and the necessity of subsisting on the most disgusting meat, which was now completely alive from putrefaction, and from which even the Indians turned with disgust. Suffice it to say, we arrived at an Indian village, named Sanchapà, in the morning of the eighth day from the time we had left the Spartan. We were here reinforced by two large boats, on board one of which was Commodore Dias, a creole Spaniard, who commanded the whole of the Patriot gun-boats; he gave us the intelligence that the troops had staid at Sanchapà during the night, and were now only a few miles in advance of us, and that he had been anxiously waiting our coming to hasten us on; for it was expected that eight of the Royalists gun-boats were lying in ambush for us, as on the preceding day a schooner laden with mules from Angostura had been boarded by them and made a prize.

The people in these two boats presented, if possible, a more savage and fantastic appearance than those of our own. They were of both sexes, entirely naked, their bodies and long straight hair were daubed all over with red ochre, their arms and legs were bound round with string made of the fibres of the cocoa-tree, and plaited in a variety of figures. This is done while in their infancy, and occasions their limbs to swell above the bandage, which produces a very singular appearance. Sanchapà is a small village, built with rough branches of trees and covered with the plantain and cocoa leaf; it contains about two hundred inhabitants, most of whom use this red ochre. They are a set of timid and cowardly people; their chief support is fish and beef, which they kill in the plains, where the cattle run wild; they also hunt the tiger for the sake of its skin, which, during the time they were under the Royalist government, they disposed of to the merchants that traded up the Orinoco. They are armed with long bows and arrows, which they make and use very skilfully.

We here received a fresh supply of beef, though not sufficient to last us to the next

town; for we were again deceived as to the distance; and they assured us that a further supply would be sent to meet us before we had been two days out.

We then commenced our voyage, and shortly came within sight of the other boats; and as we hourly expected to meet with the enemy, we prepared for action, and cleared away our small gun. Our force, at this time, consisted of six boats; the two that had been dispatched for the troops on board the Favourite, joining the rest at Sanchapà, at which place the river branches off in two directions.

As we had now a favourable wind, we were enabled to keep within a mile of the rest during the whole of this day; but towards night we lost sight of them, and again ran in among the trees to await the return of daylight.

In the morning we cast off our rope and continued our course, yet under great apprehensions of encountering the enemy's boats, in a situation where we could have no hopes of escaping.

At the expiration of four days, we arrived at

an island situated in the Orinoco named Tortola, after enduring many hardships from the incessant and dreadful rain, and from want of nourishment; as the small quantity of provision we had from Sanchapà, became so bad and offensive, after being exposed to the sun and rain twenty-four hours, that it was with the greatest loathing we ate of this carrion food, to mollify the cravings of nature.

Tortola is a delightful and romantic place, and is at present inhabited by Indians, and a few creoles, whose huts extend for two miles along the banks, at the distance of fifty or sixty yards from each other.

Angostura, and the fortress of Old Guyana, now chiefly depend on this place for their scanty supplies of plantains, cassava*, and papillon, or sugar; this is the only spot for many hundred miles up the Orinoco, where

* This root when dug up is of the most poisonous and malignant nature; but after it has been well washed, and has undergone some other preparations known to the natives, it is scraped through a grater, and the powder, placed damp on a hot iron slab, is afterwards exposed to the sun. This they prefer to bread, but to Europeans it has but a dry and unsavoury taste.

they continue to cultivate the earth during the time of a cruel and exterminating warfare, and forward their produce in small canoes some hundred miles up the river. Our Indians received a small quantity of sugar-cane from the natives, of which they proffered us a part, that proved very refreshing and delicious after our disgusting diet; but we could not prevail upon the people to let us have a quantity of it in exchange for some of our apparel. I suppose their refusal was in consequence of their obligation to send certain stated supplies to the above-mentioned places.

We had left this island two days ere we arrived at Old Guyana, where we found that the rest of the boats had arrived the preceding day. At this place we disembarked, for the purpose of resting ourselves on shore one night. We received in addition to our beef a small quantity of cassava, sufficient for two days, and were to re-embark the next morning for Angostura. The fortress of Old Guyana is situated on the banks of the Orinoco, more than three hundred miles from La Boca de los Navios, or Grand Mouth. The town contains about two hundred tolerable

houses, and the rest are miserable huts scattered about the rocks. The inhabitants were then in a most deplorable state, starving and perishing for want; two-thirds of them are Indians, and the remainder creoles; they have a house in the square, where the priest celebrates mass. These ecclesiastics have the greatest dominion over the people, and in the missions govern them entirely; though in the province of Guyana very few now remain, as they were indiscriminately massacred wherever they were found, by the Patriots.

There are two forts above the town, which command two branches of the Orinoco; yet their situation is not the best, as they are capable of being annoyed greatly by a small yet very high island, in the middle of the river, about three-quarters of a mile distant. The principal fort is built of stone, and can only be entered by a long ladder that is lowered from the wall for that purpose. It mounts six heavy guns, and is of such importance to the Patriots that they have generally two hundred of their regular troops stationed at this place. The other is built of brick and earth, and mounts about eight guns, but is in

no respect so fine a fort as the former; the entrance to itis also by a ladder. This place was taken by Admiral Bryon, in conjunction with the land troops under General Bermudas, and is the strongest fort belonging to the Patriots in the province of Guyana; it is the key from the Colonies to Santo Tomé, or Angostura, and all vessels coming up the river are obliged to anchor a certain time within gun-shot of it, in order to be examined.

The troops that we found here presented the most miserable appearance, the greater part of the privates being not more than thirteen or fourteen years of age, and tottering under the weight of their muskets; they were principally blacks, some of them wearing a uniform, and others having only a piece of linen round the loins. They had obtained these uniforms from the military stores brought by the brig Hunter, from England. The motto on their caps, *vencer ó morir*, did not seem well calculated for such a wretched-looking set of beings.

Colonel Gillmore, in company with Admiral Bryon, whom we found here on our arrival, and who had been here some days, de-

parted for Angostura the same morning, in a gun-boat fitted up for them; the best provision, &c., that could be procured being put on board, which, with what the Admiral had brought from the Victoria, would enable them to live very well.

I was now left in command of the Artillery establishment, with orders to place myself under the direction of Colonel P——, until my arrival at Angostura; and different arrangements were made for us on board the boats.

At this place we buried one of our artillerymen, who died on the same day he landed from the baggage-boat, in consequence of the severe hardships he had endured with us, the sun having affected his brain and produced a raging fever, which carried him off in a few hours.

The next morning we embarked in the following order:—Colonel P—— with part of his officers and men in one boat; myself, Lieutenant C——, with five of the Rifle officers, and a party of men in the second, or former baggage-boat; the remainder of the men and officers on board the third and fourth. We were agreeably surprised, on em-

barking, to find a small space in the stern of the boat covered with an awning of bullocks' hide, which would in some measure protect us from the sun and rain; but we soon found that this, instead of meliorating our situation, considerably increased our distresses; for it was there that we were obliged to lay our meat, which in two days became putrid and alive. The vermin, together with that which adhered to the ox's hide, (put in the boat as soon as stript off the body of the animal,) were every minute falling amongst us, and rendered our present situation equally bad with the former. We arrived in three days at San Miguel's, which is situated about two miles from the banks of the river; and as we expected to get a supply of beef to last us to Angostura at this place, I in company with several officers went on shore to see the village. It is delightfully situated upon a very high eminence, and has a large square, in which is a fine building, formerly a monastery, and now occupied by the Governor of these missions: there is a fine chapel or church, built of wood, connected with the monastery, which I with difficulty procured permission to see. It is

supported by two rows of lofty yet slender pillars, painted with a variety of colours, intermixed and winding upwards in a spiral direction. There are a few pictures remaining on the walls, and some gilt ornaments on the altar, which have escaped the hands of the plunderer, most probably because they were deemed not likely to repay the trouble of carrying them away. The houses are built opposite the church in a very regular and pleasing order, and have an air of great neatness. There are three ranges, from the outside of which the spectator can see in a direct line through at least twenty houses, the doors being merely openings in the wall at each side, exactly in a line with each other. The appearance within, does not correspond with that of the exterior; for the families that reside in them, are a most filthy set of people. The chief employment of the women and old men, is to make hammocks of the bark and fibres of the cocoa-tree, which when finished resemble a fishing-net. They never walk to any great distance without one of these at their backs: when tired they sling it to the branches of the first convenient tree, for the

purpose of taking their rest. They likewise in time of peace salt a great deal of *tasajo*, or beef, cut up in the manner I have already described, which they export, together with hides, to the Colonies and United States. I was greatly surprised at not meeting with any men in their houses, but learnt that they repair into the plains during the day to catch the cattle, which they effect by means of a long rope of green hide, coiled up and fastened by one end to the horse. The other end, which is formed into a noose, they throw with amazing dexterity and precision over the head or horns of the animal to be caught, and drawing it tight, gallop off immediately with their prize.

At this place we gathered a few green oranges, which we boiled on shore with our meat. This dish, though very bad, was some change, and we mixed a little of the juice with water, which made an agreeable beverage; but of which, we, in our weak state, were afraid to drink much. We received our supply of meat, and the next morning continued our voyage. The scenery now gradually opened a pleasing prospect to us,

who had hitherto seen nothing but thick woods on either hand. The beautiful and diversified features of the landscape that now presented itself, appeared like a multitude of cities and castles scattered in every direction, with numberless lakes intersecting the neighbouring mountains.

This part of the voyage, in any other circumstances, and in the dry season, would have been most delightful; but our condition on board these boats was so miserable, that all sensation of pleasure in contemplating the surrounding beauties was dead within us.

Towards the close of the sixth evening from leaving San Miguel's, we were within a few miles of Angostura, and met with a boat that had brought us a live ox and a bottle of rum, by the direction of Colonel Gillmore, who had arrived at the head-quarters. Although we had not eaten any thing that day, we were still unwilling to have the beast killed, as we were aware, that while the Indians had any thing to eat, we could not expect to get on any farther; therefore, against our own feelings, we prevented them from stopping to

cook the meat, until they should have rowed to a late hour. It was on this condition that we permitted the ox to be killed.

The next day in the afternoon we arrived at the end of our voyage, and with great satisfaction set our feet on shore.

We now left the boats; and after seeing my detachment settled in their quarters, which was a large ruined house, I repaired to my Colonel, and found him in possession of a good house, situated close to the banks of the Orinoco.

He seeing that Lieutenant C—— and myself were unable to use any farther exertion that day, kindly invited us to remain with him until we should have rested ourselves a day or two. We were given to understand, that our situation here would not be much bettered, excepting that we should have a house to shelter us during the night; but as for rations, we were to receive nothing but beef.

Santo Tomé, or Angostura, is built on the left bank of the Orinoco, as you approach it from the grand Mouth. There is a fine row of houses built of stone in the Spanish style, extending along a bank which is considerably

elevated above the water. The most striking building in this range is Admiral Bryon's house, and that of the then Adjutant-General, Soublette, a native of Caraccas. Leaving this house, in a direct line from the water, you cross over the principal street, and still continuing the same direction enter the square, where the principal buildings that deserve attention are the palace of the Supreme Chief, General Bolivar, which is always guarded by a strong detachment of men. There is a large square brick building which encloses a great space of ground at the extremity of the square opposite the palace, which was intended for a church, but owing to the continual warfare that has disturbed this province, it has been left in its present unfinished state. Near it is the prison, where are confined about three hundred Royalist prisoners, who are condemned to slavery. These poor wretches are destitute of all covering, except a piece of sack-cloth round their middle; and in this manner exposed to the burning sun, they perform the most laborious work. They have a heavy chain on one foot, and are constantly attended by a still more wretched

guard, who upon every trivial occasion embitter their misery by the most wanton cruelty. As I had often occasion to go on duty into this prison, I had opportunities of frequently observing the punishment inflicted on these men. In the yard are various machines for the purpose: one of these is particularly horrible in this climate, being an immense piece of timber divided into two, in the manner of stocks, with a great number of holes; the upper part is lifted by five or six men, and the unfortunate wretch is placed with his neck in one of the holes; his feet are then put into correspondent ones, and in this manner he is suspended horizontally, sometimes for forty-eight hours without nourishment, and suffering the most excruciating torture from the dreadful heat, his head being close to this immense timber frame, and without a possibility of turning it one way or other. The only remaining building worthy of notice in the square, is that where the priest celebrates mass; it has formerly been a convent; the greater part of it is now laid out for the residence of the native officers of high rank, the priests reserving

apartments for themselves, and a long room with an organ in it, where they perform their holy functions. From the square there are two streets, at the back of Bolivar's house, parallel to each other, which lead up to the magazine, and to the gates that open into the country. At this place a few temporary works were thrown up by the Spaniards, and a platform was raised in the space of a night, thirty feet from the ground, capable of containing two hundred infantry. It has the appearance of an observatory, and a breast-work of plank is raised on the top, of sufficient strength to resist a musket-ball. The ascent is by a step-ladder; and from this place there is a most enchanting view: the Orinoco is seen winding in different directions for miles, and sometimes a few gun-boats and canoes are observed paddling towards the city, which add much interest to the scene. On turning towards the interior, the spectator beholds boundless plains, and here and there the ruins of batteries and religious houses, with a few Indian huts and orange groves.

In this square, close against the gate, was a chair, in which General Paer was shot, and

as an account of this event may not prove uninteresting, I shall briefly relate the principal particulars.

This General was a mulatto, and second in command in the Patriot army: he was considered the most clever officer in the Independent cause, but was not without his enemies; he was accused of treason, and a plot of endeavouring to raise the mulattos and Indians in his favour, for the purpose of massacreing all the whites, and usurping the supreme command. How far this may be true I am not able to determine; but he was tried at Angostura, by the chief Generals and Admiral Bryon, and condemned to suffer death. He was the bosom friend of Bolivar, who with the most agonizing feelings was compelled to sign his death-warrant. On being conducted to the place of execution, he passed the palace of the Supreme Chief, who was standing at the window to take a last look at his friend; the mournful procession so affected Bolivar's feelings that he hastily turned away, and, with an apparent emotion, audibly exclaimed, 'adieu, my poor friend!'

General Paer was then led to the gates,

where he with great firmness of mind took his seat in the fatal chair, and uncovering his breast, waved his hand as the signal to the soldiers, who lodged seven balls in different parts of his body, two of them passing through his stomach into the wall behind him. This General was a brave man, a good officer, and universally beloved by the Independent troops; and his death, which took place a short time previous to our arrival, was an irreparable loss to the Patriot cause.

Two days after we had arrived, Lieutenant C—— and myself, were introduced by our Colonel to General Bolivar, who received us very graciously, and taking each by the hand, expressed his pleasure at our joining the standard of liberty. Bolivar is of the middle stature and of a commanding figure; his countenance is sallow, and strongly marked with anxiety; his eyes are uncommonly penetrating. He is of a noble family, and was one of the richest men in the Caracas.

He received his education in Europe, over the greater part of which he has travelled; and is altogether an accomplished man. He is versed in several languages, including the

English, though he never makes a practice of speaking the latter, as he would be continually troubled by officers, who, when they have not a knowledge of the Spanish tongue, cannot prefer their complaints.

In regard to quarters at Angostura we were tolerably well off; but as to living, the people at this time were absolutely starving; the troops were allowed two pounds of meat per man, for one day's ration, without any thing else; and this supply was very uncertain. The officers were allowed four pounds sometimes; but this was of little consequence, for we could not exchange our supplies for any other article: yet while our baggage lasted we procured a little cassava, and other common necessaries, at an enormous price; therefore in a month's time were destitute of almost every article that was saleable.

This manner of living occasioned a severe flux amongst the Europeans, which carried off a great many.

Colonel P——'s corps, in consequence of the impossibility of maintaining them at Angostura, were dispatched to the missions near San Miguel, where they were to train some

Indians to the practice of small arms. The artillery detachment were detained in order to take part in the duty of the city, until the brigade of guns should be sent for, and men obtained for the organization of the corps.

The corps under the command of Colonels Wilson and Hippesley had arrived at this place ten weeks before us, and had proceeded to San Fernando de Apure, which is at some distance farther up the Orinoco. There they met the Independent army in full retreat, having been defeated by Morillo. The cause of the Patriots was then so desperate, that Bolivar (as I was informed) declared his intention, if possible, of forwarding his allies, the British troops, out of the country, to a place of safety in some of the West-India colonies; as it would be useless to expose them to certain destruction, where there was no chance of success. Consequently Bolivar and his staff, with part of Colonel H——'s * hussars, returned immediately to Angostura; Colonel

* The 1st Hussars, with the exception of a very few, withdrew themselves from under the command of Colonel H——, and volunteered their services under Colonel Wilson.

W——'s corps remaining, by their own consent, with General Paes.

This General was originally a muleteer, and for his daring and courageous conduct was elected to the command of four or five hundred of Guerilla Indians, which has encreased to near three thousand. On this force the Independent cause entirely relies. They are armed with a long rough mis-shapen lance, and mounted on small fleet horses; their only uniform is a blanket, with a hole cut in the middle; sometimes they wear a large straw hat on their heads, with a tuft of red and white feathers tied together.

Paes is a Sambo of low stature but pleasing aspect, and commands in the province of Varinas. His usual uniform (in action) is a thin pair of Indian trowsers that reach to his knees, a blanket cut in the manner above described, with a large straw hat; his feet and legs are bare; and thus equipped he will mount his horse, grasp his lance, and lead his troops to the charge.

His principal amusement and diversion is hunting, in which he is more expert than any in his province: he is attended upon those

occasions by his officers, whom he soon leaves behind and proceeds to the attack of the wild cattle alone. He is a man of no education, and can only just write his name, his signature being absolutely necessary to all passports through the province. As an instance of his remarkable bravery, I will relate a circumstance that happened in the Orinoco. Bolivar being in company with Paes on the banks of the river, on a reconnoitring excursion, and perceiving four of the enemy's gun-boats on the opposite side, about half a mile distant, expressed a wish that the Independents were in possession of them, to enable them to make an attack by water on the other side. Paes declared he would soon accomplish his wish, at which Bolivar laughed, and asked him how he intended to come at them. This taunt piqued Paes, who, collecting a party of his followers, demanded of them if they would follow him, after which he drew his sword, and placing it in his mouth, plunged into the stream with his brave Indians, succeeded in boarding the enemy's boats with very little loss, and returned in triumph, to the no small as-

tonishment of Bolivar and his troops. The men in General Paes's province are a set of brave, robust, and hardy people; they are called Guerrillas, and until lately have not taken any part in the revolution, but are now the only troops which the Royalists dread to encounter; their horses being so swift of foot, that they surprise the enemy in camp during the night, when they are supposed to be leagues distant. Yet they seldom come to a general engagement, for then, in that case, they would frequently suffer a defeat. Against the disciplined troops of the king, their bravery and rashness in close combat would prove their ruin, as they advance in an irregular manner to the charge, each striving to be foremost.

This courageous disposition does not extend to the people of Guyana, who are a pusillanimous race, yet very proud and haughty, and remarkably jealous of foreigners, whom they consider as interlopers and needy adventurers. The religion that is inculcated to them by bigoted fanatics alone, teaches them to despise the heretics, as they style the English. Consequently if they now

show so much indifference to Europeans, how will they comport themselves when they are solicited to recompense them for past services, should they eventually succeed in establishing their independence?

Colonel H——, on his return to Angostura, finding that there was not the most distant prospect that the engagements he had entered into with Mr. Mendez, (in London,) would be ratified, obtained his passport and embarked on board a vessel which (as I have already stated) we met with near the mouth of the Orinoco.

The two corps of Hussars I have mentioned as being under the command of Colonels W—— and H——, on their arrival at Angostura, fared tolerably well for some time; as a supply of flour and a few other necessaries had been sent up the river. Upon our arrival this had been long expended, and nothing but misery and starvation awaited us; evils which our additional numbers tended to aggravate.

It had been debated and determined upon, some time before our arrival, that the British troops should receive the following sums of

money according to their rank:—Colonels ten cut dollars * per month; Lieutenants eight, and Cornets six:—consequently, before the corps under Colonel P—— embarked for the missions, they requested their commissions and a part of this money in advance, which under some pretext was denied them. Indignant at this, their Colonel, with the rest of the officers, demanded to be sent with their passports to some of the West-India Islands, to which the Supreme Chief at first consented, but afterwards solicited them to alter their plan, assuring them that a part of the money should be given, and their commissions sent to them. They were induced to accede, from the certain difficulties to which they would expose themselves, should they even effect their return to the colonies, which was not very easy.

After the departure of the rifle corps, nothing particular occurred for the space of a month. This time was passed by us in the

* A cut dollar is eight reales in Venezuela, and is equal to about two shillings and six-pence English currency, though it is a base coinage made by the Patriots, and not payable any where else.

greatest misery; and our baggage, with the exception of what was indispensably necessary to allow us a change of linen, we were compelled to dispose of, and for this we received but little; as for every thing they sold us we had to pay a most exorbitant price, to compensate the risk incurred in bringing these things from the West-India islands. Our intended allowance of money was very difficult to be procured, and it was generally the end of the second month before we could receive pay for the first; it was at last discontinued. This indeed was no great loss, as the stipend was so trifling that it would not enable us to purchase a morsel of cassava or bread above five or six times.

A most dreadful flux was now daily consuming the men, and I at last was seized with this malignant disorder from the long duration of so much misery, and from continued subsistence upon bad meat, of which even the sight was loathsome; yet the cravings of nature were peremptory and could not be resisted, although the inevitable consequence was an augmentation of the complaint. Lieu-

tenant C—— with great difficulty obtained his passport, in consideration of the dangerous state to which he was reduced, and sailed in the Sarah brig that had arrived in the Orinoco with arms, &c.

In him I lost a valuable companion, whose company sometimes afforded a little alleviation to my distress; we would converse occasionally on the happy country we had left until we had forgot our then wretched situation, when the entrance of some companion in misery would painfully recall us to our recollection. After being confined with this dreadful illness about a fortnight, without being able to take scarcely any nourishment, lest it should aggravate the malady, a small supply of flour arrived in a North American vessel; and we were then allowed a loaf of about a quarter of a pound weight per day, which was brought to my quarters by one of the soldiers, generally about seven o'clock in the morning. Frequently our Doctor, a Frenchman, who unceasingly attended me, was present when this bread was brought, and I could plainly see how visibly affected he was when he perceived the avidity and eager-

ness with which I ate this my only nourishment, and the anxiety I evinced for the return of the next morning. My Colonel behaved with the greatest kindness, calling daily to see me; and when it was in his power, would occasionally give me a little money, which he could ill spare. The allowance of bread, though small, tended greatly to my recovery, and in about three weeks I was in tolerable health.

As cleanliness is of the greatest consequence in all climates, but more particularly between the tropics, the British officers whose small allowance would not enable them to pay for the frequent washing of their linen, had to attend personally to that operation. For this purpose it was customary to repair to the rocks in the river about midnight; one of the party being stationed to give timely notice of the approach of the alligators,* this duty being taken in turn until the operation was completed.

* These animals are so numerous about Angostura, that they have been known frequently to come into the streets by the water-side; and one evening actually car-

We had been now near three months at Angostura, and preparations were commencing for the opening of the campaign; as the rainy season, which lasts from about the middle of March to December, renders it impossible for the army to continue hostilities. During the greater part of this time only partial skirmishes took place.

The periodical inundation of the Orinoco begins in April, and ceases in August: in October the flood is low, arriving at its shallowest point in February; the rise is equal to thirteen fathoms, at the distance of ninety leagues from the ocean.

These is sometimes an intermission of three or four days fine weather in the rainy season; but during the rest of the time the rain comes in such torrents and rapidity, that the plains on the borders of the Orinoco are inundated by fresh water, to the distance of some hundred miles. The intention of General Bolivar was to send for our light artillery from St.

ried off a woman and child from the rocks, where she was washing.

Bartholomew's, with directions for it to be taken to Margarita; where we were shortly to proceed and get men in order to train them as speedily as possible to the artillery duties; a battering train was likewise preparing, (yet not in very great style,) for the purpose of landing at Cumana, which place it was intended to besiege; though a communication was to be first opened between General Marino's division, then near Cumanaçoa, which we understood consisted of two thousand men. This statement will subsequently prove to have been very incorrect. To effect the communication it was necessary to march through Barcelona, or obtain possession of a post near La Guayra belonging to the Royalists. We were greatly pleased with the idea of leaving Angostura, as we were certain we could not be worse off in any other part with respect to provisions. We therefore set about our military arrangements with alacrity. The first hussars, formerly commanded by Colonel H——, but now by Colonel R——, embarked for the missions near San Fernando; and their absence we hoped would meliorate our situation, as there would not be so many to pro-

vide for, but we were deceived in our expectations.

The principal officers of the Independent army now departed from Angostura, to collect their troops; who are permitted during the rainy season to retire to their native missions, a small standing force remaining on the alert to check and give notice of the approach of the enemy.

During the time we were at Angostura, I one afternoon, in company with another officer, went about two miles from the gates, and proceeded to a part where the advanced posts of the Royalists had been stationed, at the time of the attack by the Patriots on this place, in the beginning of 1817. On our road to this post, in order to see its situation, we passed through a field of remarkably high grass, which rose above our heads; when we were surprised by the appearance of a great heap of human bones: on searching farther we discovered in different places several hundred skeletons, some of which were quite perfect. This was evidently the place where the last effort of resistance was made by the Spaniards; and upon a strict

examination we were convinced, from the marks we found upon near two-thirds of the skulls, that they had been dispatched by their conquerors in cold blood, after being made prisoners, and left unburied amongst the killed of the Patriots, to feed the wild beasts and zamoras* (or black vultures). On our return we passed the burying-ground of the citizens of Angostura, which is about a mile from the town, and close to a convent now converted into an hospital; here we witnessed another sight still more horrid than the one we had left. A number of these black vultures were tearing the body of a recently buried man out of his grave, and had already devoured the flesh of his legs; they continued their shocking feast until we came close to them, and they then unwillingly hopped a few yards out of the way, evidently bent on resuming their meal as soon as we should pass. A native, who was coming from the hospital, gave us to understand with the greatest unconcern, that this was a very common scene, as a body never remained under ground many minutes after it was committed

* A large black bird, of which the neck resembles a turkey's, and which is nearly of the size of that fowl.

to the earth. The manner in which they bury them is by digging a hole about one foot deep, and spreading in it the hide of an ox lately killed; the body is then placed naked on the hide, a little earth is thrown over it as a covering, and it is thus left to be torn up in a few minutes by the beasts and birds of prey.

A brig that had been lying at Angostura*

* At this place we learned the particulars of the melancholy fate of Colonel Macdonald, who met his death in a most cruel manner, while on his passage up the Apure, to join the Patriot army, some months previous to our arrival. It appears that for a more speedy conveyance he had quitted the *flechera* in which he departed from Angostura, and with two of his companions proceeded in a canoe up an unfrequented branch of the Apure; having been unfortunately informed by the boatmen that it would shorten the voyage two or three days. On their passage they discovered an Indian village on the banks, at which place Colonel Macdonald ordered the men to land, that they might cook their meat. They conjured him not to trust himself on shore among a tribe so uncivilized as the inhabitants of this village, who now appeared in view, inviting them by signs to approach. That salutary caution he fatally neglected, and peremptorily ordered the men to pull toward the shore. The savages attracted by the splendour of Colonel Macdonald's dress, contrived to pick a quarrel with him, while his friends were at a little distance; he made a most desperate defence, and it is

several months, in consequence of the inability of the Independents to procure men for her, was now hastily got in readiness to receive the detachment of artillery, and the battering train, in order to transport us to Margarita: and our men were sent on board to give their assistance in getting in the guns and mounting them. Indians were pressed for her service, and in about three weeks she was pronounced ready for sea.

stated that four or five of them fell beneath his arm; but he was at last dispatched by a discharge of their arrows. His companions made a precipitate retreat to their boats, effected their escape with considerable difficulty, and were the bearers of this lamentable intelligence. We also heard the report of the death of three officers (which afterwards proved a melancholy truth), who on their voyage up the Orinoco had put on shore in the same manner as ourselves, to cook and eat their miserable provision. They had taken a small canoe and pulled a little farther on than the gun-boat, to a more favourable spot, at which were the remains of an old hut. After being absent a long time, the people in the flechera continued their progress, until they arrived at the spot where they expected to meet their companions; but their consternation and horror was great, when they found the place covered with blood, and hardly any other vestige of them remaining. They had evidently become a prey to the tigers, since which time the Indians cannot pass the place without shuddering, and have given it the name of the 'tiger hut.'

This brig, named the Apure, but late Decatur, was a North American privateer, fitted out for the Buenos-Ayres service; and was taken by Bryon, under some pretext, and by stratagem, out of a harbour belonging to King Christophe, in St. Domingo. On the morning when we were to get under weigh, Colonel P—— and the rifle corps, in company with Bolivar's body guard, arrived at Angostura by water, from the missions. Bolivar's guard were tolerable troops and above three hundred strong; they were picked men, and were completely clothed. The rifle corps, in number about two hundred and seventy, were all Sambos (or Indians); they were equipped in the rifle accoutrements, and were all of very low stature. For the time they had been under the command of Colonel P—— they certainly performed their manœuvres, which did not extend farther than the plain and most simple exercise of small arms, tolerably well. Yet so limited was the extent of their enthusiasm in the cause, that a great part of these men had been compelled to march in irons, to the place of embarkation. They were little better than wild

Indians; and the women that followed them were naked, and most disgusting objects. They had been forced from their native missions into the service, and numbers of them had already deserted.

An officer has but a poor prospect in going with this kind of troops into the field, and cannot possibly expect to obtain any credit, as they will throw away their arms upon the least failure of their attack, and will precipitately retire in the greatest disorder. Their disposition is such that they would much rather carry a large piece of sugar cane to employ themselves on the march, than their muskets, of which they try to disencumber themselves on the first opportunity.

This force was destined for San Fernando de Apure, as General Paes was then very hard pressed by the Royalists under Morillo, and was under apprehensions of being forced to a general engagement with the latter, in a situation where his own cavalry could not act to advantage. We weighed anchor about noon, and the rapidity of the current was so great that we arrived off San Miguel the next evening; after being repeatedly forced by

the eddies amongst the trees, from which situation we with considerable labour and difficulty extricated ourselves.

A vessel going down this river is generally unmanageable, and the anchor must always be in readiness to let go, in order to bring her up when any obstacle is seen a-head, as she often drifts down sideways, and consequently is often exposed to danger in passing the narrow branches of the Orinoco. The next morning we were at anchor off the fortress of Old Guyana, from whence we had been so many days on our passage to Angostura.

At this place we remained several days to make some neccessary arrangements; and during this time my Colonel and I went to an island on the opposite shore, distant about two miles and a half from the fortress, to shoot some wild ducks, with which we were informed it abounded. We procured a large sailing-boat from a brig that was lying at Guyana laden with mules; and, attended by one of our men, who carried my Colonel's rifle in addition to his fowling-piece, we landed on the island about four o'clock in the afternoon, and gave directions for the boat to pro-

ceed to her ship, and return for us towards evening. This island is separated from the main land by a narrow stream not more than twenty yards wide.

Close to the water there was one of those sheds which are frequently met with in these places. They are made by the Indians, who, when they find on their excursions a place which abounds with game or beasts, generally raise a small awning of plantain boughs supported by posts, under which they suspend their hammocks. To this spot we retired to await the return of the boat, after having traversed the island (which is about three-quarters of a mile in circumference) twice without any success.

When we had been on shore three hours, we became anxious for the return of the boat, and, towards sun-set, it being squally, were apprehensive that we should not get off that night.

As darkness ensues in this part of the world a few minutes after the sun is down, our prospect was rather uncomfortable, and it was now time to think of securing ourselves in the best manner possible against

any sudden attack from wild beasts. For this purpose we collected as much dry wood as we could find, and by flashing some powder in the pan of our pieces, in which we placed a morsel of dry linen, we succeeded in kindling a fire. We hoped that this would be a mark for the boat, should our friends venture towards us in the night, when the weather moderated. After a further lapse of three hours, we relinquished all idea of their coming, and laid ourselves down by the fire to try to sleep, one of us keeping watch for a stated time to give notice of the approach of danger. About one o'clock in the morning, being employed in replenishing our fire, I heard a great noise, apparently only at the distance of a few feet from us: I instantly laid hold of my musket and awoke the Colonel. On our starting up to ascertain what it was, we heard it making its way to the bank and in a few moments dash into the water. This was an alligator, who, if we had been asleep, would undoubtedly have carried one of us off. The Indians seldom dare to lie on the ground even in their villages close to the banks of the river, but

always sleep in hammocks, which they suspend at a safe height, as this monster would frequently visit them and carry off their children.

We passed the night in continual dread, as the tigers were roaring incessantly on the opposite side of the stream, and we were in momentary expectation of being surprised by some of them, from a knowledge that they will frequently swim across rivulets to look for their prey. Our fuel was nearly finished, and it was necessary for our preservation that we should get more. We pulled down that part of the shed which would burn, and very unwillingly went to a short distance in search of more, as that was not sufficient. How welcome was the return of day to us, and with what satisfaction did I quit this place in the boat, which, however did not come for us until near mid-day.

In the morning we again traversed the island, and met with several alligators in the long marshy grass, waiting for the ducks, which they often seize from under the water; and if a person should chance to shoot a duck near a place where they are lurking, it is in-

stantly snapped up by these voracious monsters. As we were prepared for them, and on our guard, they avoided us; for they will not commence the attack, unless they see that they have an advantage. They are very swift of foot, and the only way of escaping them, when pursued on shore, is by running in a zig-zag direction; for if a man fly from them in a straight line, they will soon overtake him, but from their unwieldly length of body, they require some time to turn.

The inhabitants of Old Guyana at this time were afflicted with a most infectious and malignant yellow fever, which swept off incredible numbers daily. They were reduced to so miserable a state, that they were absolutely perishing from want, as much as from disease; for they were unable to exert themselves to procure their former wretched sustenance; and those that were yet free from the disorder, were afraid of venturing near their houses, even if they had it in their power to administer relief. Never did the yellow fever commit in so short a time such dreadful ravages, nor was it ever attended with such aggravated misery; the people being desti-

tute both of that medical attendance and nourishment, which would have considerably lessened the number of victims.

We left this place the next day, and without any material occurrence, arrived in two days at Sancha Pa, where we remained a few hours, and then continued our voyage, intending to remain a few days at Pagia Island, in order to get every thing ready for sea. Having anchored there next morning, we secured and scaled our guns, making every preparation for action, in the event of meeting with an enemy outside. As the influx from the Atlantic extends as far as this island, it is under water for some hours during the flowing of the tide in the rainy season. Two or three families of Indians, of whom the men are pilots for the Orinoco, reside upon it. They are obliged, when the tide has set in about an hour, to embark in their canoes with their few effects, and await its ebbing. The water rises so high, that it nearly conceals their miserable huts from view.

After staying here two days, we resumed our course; and the same afternoon, grated over a bank, which lifted our rudder off the

bolts. If this accident had occurred at sea, it would most probably have been attended with extreme danger. However we were obliged to come to an anchor, in order to secure the rudder, which having at last effected with great labour and difficulty, we again set forward, and got safely over the bar. On launching into the Atlantic, we for the first time perceived the danger to which we should be exposed, should we meet with any bad weather; our crew being entirely Indians and landmen, who were now so frightened and overpowered by the tossing of the ship, that they, with the exception of very few, lay down on the deck, and could not be prevailed upon to touch a single rope, or give any assistance in working the vessel: our artillerymen and the petty officers were all on whom we had to depend, and the former could only render their assistance on deck. In addition to this misfortune, we found that our vessel had sprung a leak, in consequence, as we thought, of being so long neglected and exposed to the sun while at Angostura, the pitch having oozed out of the seams of her lower timbers while they were above

water. Having had fine weather all the way down the river, we had not discovered this circumstance; but when our vessel began to feel the effects of a troubled sea, and to lie over on her side, the water came in so fast, that we were compelled to use both pumps every half hour.

As the cabin, which was very small, was occupied by the Captain and two or three officers of higher rank, I was obliged, with the rest, who were naval officers, to remain night and day on deck, the other parts of the ship being filled with our battering train and stores. On our passage, we had during the night continual torrents of rain, attended with very heavy squalls, which rendered it necessary to keep under easy sail, from the impossibility of taking it in quick enough with our present crew. The day before we arrived at Margarita, we apprehended from the appearance of the sky, that we should have bad weather, and therefore used those precautions which were considered necessary to enable us to stand out any common squalls. About nine o'clock in the evening, we perceived a tremendous black cloud ga-

thering a-stern of us, and soon felt a fresh breeze from that quarter, which encreased rapidly, and shortly became, what mariners term, the tail of a hurricane. The boat that was suspended over the stern, was immediately crushed by the plunging of the vessel: the sails were instantly lowered, and the fore-top-sail close reefed, by three of the naval officers (Englishmen), who gallantly exposed themselves as an example to the Indians, now transfixed with horror on the deck, expecting every instant to be ingulfed in a watery grave. The water now gained so fast upon us, that we could not keep her free by constantly working the pumps. To add to the distress of our situation, one of them broke, and the strength of the crew began to flag. We were now in imminent peril, particularly if the gale should continue any time; and we could not venture to leave the remaining pump a minute.

Fortunately the wind gradually subsided in a few hours, but still left a very heavy sea, which towards day-light settled into a complete calm. About nine o'clock we discovered land before us, and a steady and

favourable breeze springing up, we came to an anchor at Margarita, in the bay of Juan Greigo, about two o'clock in the afternoon. Here we found the Victoria, two brigs, and two schooners, with a number of gun-boats. Exclusive of the others, there was the Libertador gun-brig, commanded by Captain C——, and mounting sixteen guns; this vessel was formerly his Majesty's brig of war Imogene, and had been purchased by some speculators and fitted out for the Independent service: she had arrived from Europe only a within a few weeks.

The Patriot squadron had lately returned from Gueria, which they had succeeded in occupying, in conjunction with the division under General Bermudas, who made an attack by land. This small town, with a strong battery, is situated in the Gulf of Paria, and only a few leagues from the island of Trinidad; while in possession of the Royalists it was a harbour for their gun-boats and small craft, which were constantly cruizing near the mouth of the Orinoco; in consequence of which the passage up that river was rendered very dangerous and uncertain.

The first attack was made on this place by the Independent squadron, consisting of the Victoria, one brig, two schooners, and eight gun-boats, on the 21st of August, 1818. The Scamander frigate arrived off the fort, just about the same time with Bryon: she came for the purpose of reclaiming some English property that had been carried in there by the Spaniards, and anchored out of range of the shot to witness the engagement.

At twelve o'clock a fire was opened on the fort, and eight gun-boats that were ranged along the shore; it was returned with equal promptitude by the Spaniards. The result of this attack was the loss of the Independent brig Columbia; which was taken by the enemy's gun-boats, principally owing to a calm which prevented her manœuvring. The brig was abandoned by the crew, who jumped overboard, while the Spaniards boarded on the opposite side.

The doctor* of the vessel, who was an Englishman, was below at the time the enemy took possession of her. He was towed on

* This gentleman (Mr. Davy) came out in the Emerald, and at that time belonged to the medical establishment of Colonel Hippesley's Hussars.

shore, and after being flogged, was speared to death, and his body left naked on the sea shore to putrify in the sun; in which situation he was found by his countrymen the next day.

As the Patriot gun-boats were at some distance a-stern, they were not engaged that day. A breeze springing up, the squadron stood from the shore, and closed with them, and anchored for the night, determined on a second attack the next morning. A dreadful accident happened on board the Victoria during the engagement, while they were in the act of moving a long eighteen-pounder to bear upon the boats. This gun was loaded with grape shot, and was fired by means of a lock, to the trigger of which was fastened a long piece of string. In the hurry of removing, this string was neglected, and getting entangled with something or other, occasioned the gun to go off; nine men who were before the muzzle, were literally blown to pieces; two of them, who lost their arms and legs, survived an hour in the most excruciating torture. The next morning General Bermudas landed with about one hundred and

fifty men, and marched towards the town, while the squadron and gun-boats got under weigh to co-operate with him. As soon as they perceived him near the place, they stood in, and gave the Fort a broadside. The Spaniards immediately quitted their boats and swam on shore, under a heavy fire, which killed a great number of them. They retired to the Fort, which they evacuated about midnight, having in killed and wounded upwards of one hundred and thirty men; while, on the other hand, the Patriots had only twenty in killed and wounded, including the nine men lost by the accident of the eighteen-pounder.

By the time we arrived at Magarita, the vessel made so much water, that every thing was obliged to be taken out immediately, and the pumps still kept constantly going. The next morning we disembarked, and were encamped near the sand at Juan Greigo.

The tents that we received for this purpose, had been sent from England, and had been used by the British army in all the campaigns of the Peninsula; after which they were condemned as unserviceable, and were bought up for the Patriots. In consequence of a long

sea voyage and continual damp, in a hot climate, they were now mildewed and full of holes. Under these slight coverings, were we exposed to the most scorching sun, and for two months, to torrents of incessant rain during the night and greater part of the day. In all we were encamped under canvass nearly four months. This kind of life is still worse in remarkably hot climates, than in an extremely cold one; for in the latter, it is possible to keep warm by exercise or with fires; but in the former, it is impossible to find a cool spot. In a line with our encampment, was General Bermudas' division, consisting of about eighty effective men and thirty sick. These troops presented, if possible, a more wretched appearance than any I had hitherto seen, the greater part of them wearing a pair of coarse trowsers, but destitute of every thing else, excepting some of them that had the remnants of a straw hat. They were all in possession of muskets; and a few of them had a bayonet and a cartridge-box slung on their bare backs with a piece of string, the bayonet exposed without its scabbard. The men were principally blacks of St. Domingo,

or runaway slaves from the Colonies, who had thus exchanged their lot for worse than slavery, being enticed by the deluding sound of independence and liberty, of which in fact they only enjoyed the name, for they were still governed with barbarity and despotism.

It was intended that these troops, with the artillery, in conjunction with Admiral Bryon, should attempt a landing near Cumana, wher the Supreme Chief, with General Marino's division, would be in waiting for us if they should effect a junction with each other. To facilitate this, it was necessary to send a small force of gun-boats to attack a Royalist post in the province of Barcelona, near La Guayra, which was to depart a few days previous to us. Yet if they expected to succeed, they should have immediately appointed a proportion of men to the service of the artillery, that they might have been trained to those duties immediately, of which they were so entirely ignorant, as not even to imagine that it required time to prepare men for this service. Instead of this we were kept in inactivity and misery, when a regular routine

of duty would have left us less time to ponder on our unpleasant situation. Previous to leaving Angostura, Colonel Gillmore had received the appointment of Adjutant-General to the Independent army; a situation that he was more capable of filling than any officer in their service. I also received my commission as senior Captain of the Independent artillery; the first intention of Bolivar being to fit out a half brigade of light four-pounders, of which I was to have the command, in order to act if an opportunity should present itself previous to the arrival of our own brigade, for which Admiral Bryon dispatched a vessel some time after our arrival at Margarita. The expedition, however, which we had now before us, with the battering train, rendered the fitting out of the half brigade unnecessary; although it was then nearly completed.

The taking of Margarita by the Patriots, was a serious loss to the Royalists, on account of its near connexion with the Continent, from which it is separated by a strait of only seven leagues, and to windward of the principal ports of the Caracas. As this is a place

of some interest, I will endeavour to describe it as concisely as possible. This strait is the channel through which all ships must pass which come from Europe, or windward to Cumana, Barcelona, and La Guayra; it is not navigable in its whole breadth, the island of Coche between Margarita and the Continent leaving only a narrow pass, though, from the continual calm prevailing in this latitude, it is not attended with danger. The isle has three ports,—Pampatar, on the east south-east; Pueblo de la Mar, a league to leeward of the former; and the bay of Juan Greigo. The population, previous to the late sanguinary conflicts for independence, was estimated at about 13,500 souls, the greater part whites and castes, with about 2000 Guaqueria Indians. But since the first struggle for liberty, it has considerably diminished; numbers having been cut off by the sword, and many having emigrated to a place of safety in the colonies, without espousing either party. Their principal employment was fabricating beautiful cotton hammocks of a superior quality. Poultry, which was formerly in great variety and

plenty, together with salt-fish, was exported by the inhabitants to the Continent.

The coast of Margarita is mountainous and rocky; but in the interior the soil is good and produces maize, a small quantity of sugar-cane, and a variety of fruits, amongst the most delicious of which is the pine-apple, which grows here in the greatest perfection. At present the people are indifferent to cultivation, owing to their continual state of inquietude and apprehension of a visit from the Spaniards, and are now starving in a soil that would at least furnish them with common necessaries and even luxuries. From a long duration of misery, they have become so inured to it, that they are now careless as to what becomes of them. The Indians are very expert in the pearl fishery, of which there are said to be great quantities here and at the neighbouring isle of Cubacua. This pursuit formed, at one time, their chief occupation. The capital of Margarita is the Cuidad or City of Ascencion, situated in the centre of the island. It was formerly a very considerable and beautiful place, but it is now in ruins, and not a whole roof is to be seen

on any of the houses; even the one in which the Governor (General Gomez) resides has only one room partially sheltered from the inclemency of the weather. The most attractive place near the city, and the only thing now worthy of attention, is the romantic and tremendous pass which communicates with it, by a draw-bridge thrown over a chain of lofty and stupendous mountains; with a little improvement of this natural defence, that part of the island might be rendered impregnable.

Pampatar was a small town, and formerly the only port where trade and maritime concerns were carried on; but it is now little worthy of notice, being a most miserable place. All naval business is at present transacted at Juan Greigo, where Bryon has established his Court of Admiralty. The town of Norte is situated about four miles from the above place, and contains about one hundred and twenty miserable huts or houses. The only tolerable ones are those of General Arismendi, and of the two priests, who entirely rule these bigoted and ignorant people. These two places are connected with each

other; the latter being by far the best, for ecclesiastics always obtain the preference. There is a large square, at the end of which stands the church, a tolerably good edifice, built of stone and brick, white-washed, and covered with slate. The interior exhibits an appearance of neatness, but is destitute of the characteristic splendour of the Roman Catholic religion. A few paces from the doors is placed a large wooden crucifix, raised on a pedestal, before which they bend the knee previous to entering. There are two or three more spots in the island, containing a few straggling miserable huts, now in ruins. On the road to the village of San Juan, is another pass, something similar to that of the city.

Margarita abounds with beautiful parrots, parroquets, and in some parts with rabbits. It produces also a beautiful species of lizard, of a green and gold colour, and nearly one foot long from the head to the extreme point of the tail. The guana is very common, as is also the destructive locust, a most beautiful insect, and at this place remarkably large. The scarcity of water is very much felt in

some parts of the island, and particularly in the Norte and Juan Greigo; from the latter place we were compelled to send two miles for it, and then it was so unwholesome as to occasion severe indisposition for the first few weeks after our arrival.

The principal scene of action between the Royalists and Patriots in 1817, at Margarita, was at Pampatar and Juan Greigo: at the latter a most dreadful slaughter was made of the Patriots. There is a fort near this place, on a very high eminence, of which the Independents had possession, and in which they were closely blockaded by the King's troops, under General Morillo. Reduced at length by want of water and provision to the brink of the grave, they desperately determined upon cutting their way through the Royalist camp; in effecting which they were, with the exception of very few, speared or sabred by their enemies, who were prepared to receive them. Their bones are now at the foot of this fort, intermixed with those of the Royalists, in all amounting to the number of seven or eight hundred skeletons. They were thus barbarously left unburied by their compa-

nions, (the Independents,) who afterwards obliged Morillo to retire to the Continent, after sustaining a most sanguinary defeat. General Gomez, of whom I have spoken as the Governor, challenged Morillo to decide the fate of the island by single combat, which the latter declined, from a consideration (most likely) that it was derogatory to the honour he owed his master the King, whom he then represented.

For the first three weeks of our stay at Margarita, the officers dined at the table of the Commander-in-Chief, General Arismendi, when we certainly fared better than we had at Angostura; though very little ceremony was observed at this military banquet, as the fingers in general are the only knives and forks used upon these occasions.

Commodore Jolie, a Frenchman, and second in command under Bryon, had been dispatched with three schooners and a brig, to cruize in the colonies, for the purpose of collecting a number of sailors to man the Victoria and rest of the fleet, which were nearly destitute of men, more than a third of their companions having been carried off by sickness, and the

residue having quitted in disgust that service in which they had risked and suffered so much, without the smallest recompence. We expected that Commodore Jolie would return the space of a few days, when we should in immediately open our expedition.

One evening, after the retreat had sounded, and we had retired to repose in our miserable tents, in which every thing was thoroughly soaked with the rain, the alarm-drums beat to arms, and Juan Griego was soon in the utmost confusion; the women wildly hurrying one way, and their husbands another, to the place of general rendezvous (near Arismendi's house), to ascertain the cause of this unseasonable alarm.

We could see unusual lights passing along the mountains, towards that part of the island where, as I have mentioned, were Indians who were supposed to be favourable to the Royalist cause. This created a suspicion that we were threatened with an attack that was to be conducted in the night, and the utmost vigilance was therefore necessary to counteract any treachery on the part of the Indians.

A small detachment of natives armed with

what could not be called lances, being merely long sticks with a piece of soft iron pointed at the top, were dispatched to endeavour to reconnoitre the hills; but returned in a few hours without being able to effect this object. We were therefore obliged to remain under arms all night, and strong patroles were kept on the alert. The artillery were ordered to the fort in case of need. However, nothing transpired that night or the two succeeding ones, which we passed in the same manner; nor were we ever able to find out from whence those lights came, though we conjectured, most probably with truth, that they belonged to some parties of Indians that had wandered to a distance from their usual haunts. Yet as the Spaniards had already made a similar attack in the same manner, it was requisite to be on our guard. From the dispatches received from Commodore Jolie, it was understood that he had taken two or three slave ships, and had been otherwise successful; and that it would be some time before he could possibly steer for Margarita, as he had procured but few men. It was now determined to send the gun-boats to secure the post we

had in view; and accordingly five of them were got in readiness, and two-thirds of General Bermudas' troops were embarked on board of them, together with a number of Margaritanians; in all amounting to about five hundred men. This expedition was commanded by a creole Spaniard, who dined with us at Arismendi's on the day it was to sail. Towards sun-set a gun was fired as a signal for them to weigh, and in an hour they were seen paddling out of the bay.

It may here be necessary to relate a circumstance, to which we attributed the failure of this expedition:—an American brig, laden with Spanish property, had been taken by one of the Independent cruizers and sent into Margarita, where the cargo was condemned; and the brig, being detained several weeks, was after repeated solicitations on the part of the Captain permitted to get under weigh. She sailed on the day preceding the departure of the gun-boats; and the consequence of this bad management, in neglecting to put the embargo in force, was, that she most probably went to Cumana or La Guayra, where the Royalists were put in possession of every information relative to the affair.

They immediately dispatched a force superior to that which they expected, and stationed them in ambush behind the projection of an immense rock, where the Independents must necessarily pass. The Patriots discovered their danger in time to have made a good retreat; which was prudently ordered by their commander.

The enemy's force consisted of eight large gun-boats and a felucca, which was more than double that of the Independents; besides which there were a number of veteran Spanish troops on board, which had been sent from the garrison of Cumana. The second in command of the Patriots, rashly refused to comply with the order of his commander, to retire until a more favourable opportunity; and in consequence they commenced an unequal contest, from which the boat containing Bermudas' troops instantly retired, and left their companions to inevitable slaughter.

The proposer of this rash engagement was killed on the first onset; and the commander effected his escape, with about thirty others, under cover of the night, in their shattered boat, (all of them most severely wounded) to

Margarita. Having landed upon an uninhabited part of the island, they were compelled, enfeebled as they were from loss of blood, to walk to Juan Greigo; at which place they arrived one by one, to the no small consternation of Bryon and to our great surprise.

Shortly after the return of the survivors of this expedition, we received the additional bad news of the defeat of General Marino; whose van-guard had been cut to pieces by Royalists, and the main body being put to flight, were now dispersed in different directions. This division we at first understood to have consisted of more than two thousand men; but we now found that it never exceeded five hundred, all of whom were natives of Margarita. In consequence of this intelligence, our expedition was for the present relinquished; and it was now determined that we should have a number of men attached to us, to be trained to the light brigade duties, when it should arrive.

Nothing of moment occurred for some time; the dispatches received from Angostura and Varinas were not very satisfactory.

The Supreme Chief, in consequence of the defeat of Marino, had abandoned his former project of attack, and was still at his head-quarters at Angostura.

General Paes had forced the Spaniards to retire upon San Carlos or Rio Negro; but had in turn been obliged to make a precipitate retreat from General Morillo, which was effected without ever coming to an engagement; and he had now fallen back upon San Fernando de Apure.

Six sail of vessels had been observed hovering about Margarita for two days, and were each day signalized from the different posts, as if coming to Juan Greigo. They in all respects resembled the Royalist squadron we had seen at Five Islands; two large ships being discernible, and the others, brigs or schooners, with a sloop or felucca. If they were friends and intended coming in, their entrance was easily practicable; as, to all appearance, no obstruction presented itself. In lying off the island they excited suspicion that they had come with the hostile intention of blockading the ports, or of effecting a landing in the night. In consequence, the then half

ruined forts were hastily put in a state of defence; the English artillery, together with a few of the natives, were ordered to the forts; and the whole of the troops on the island were ordered to be in readiness at a minute's notice, to march to any part where their service might be required.

The second day from the commencement of these preparations, the vessels still remained off the island, but gradually drew nearer; a strict guard was therefore kept upon every pass of importance, and a gun-boat was sent out in order to watch their motions during the night, and to give timely notice of their situation. Instructions were also sent on board the Victoria to Captain C——,—the purport of which was, that upon any alarm from the gun-boat, or in the event of her firing a gun, he should immediately get the Victoria under weigh, and anchor her as close as possible under the protection of our guns. This arrangement was made because she was then hardly within range of our shot, and would consequently be exposed to the combined fire of the vessels (should they be enemies) without a possibility of receiving

assistance from us. A little before sun-set Bryon repaired to the signal-house,* to try if he could then discover what they were. He returned in a short time to the fort, and declared his positive opinion that they were Spaniards, whose intention was to effect a landing by surprise, in order to destroy all in their power and then re-embark. About six o'clock in the evening, it being then nearly dark, I thought I discovered a vessel coming round the point of the bay, which was about a mile distant. I mentioned this to Bryon, and on pointing it out to him, he agreed that I was right in my conjectures, for she was now plainly perceptible. We allowed her to come a little nearer, and then fired a shot over her; when she immediately put about, and got under shelter of the land, round the point.

On the report of our gun from the fort,

* This telegraph is situated on the summit of a very high mountain; the altitude of which, according to an observation which I took with a common quadrant, is about 719 feet above the level of the sea. This mountain is two miles from Juan Greigo; and two men are stationed there during the day, to make signal on the appearance of any sail.

the whole island was shortly up in arms; and the firing was repeated by the batteries at Pampatar and the Norte. Three hundred men were detached to patrole upon the sand, to prevent any boats from landing under cover of the night; and about one hundred and fifty men were sent to the fort. At seven o'clock Admiral Bryon and my Colonel returned to Juan Greigo, leaving me in command, with orders, upon any signal from the gun-boat, to dispatch a messenger to acquaint them immediately, and to fire the alarm-gun.

Having appointed to the natives their several duties in case of need, and given the requisite explanations, we placed sentinels in the most advantageous position, some distance in advance of each other, to give timely notice of the due observance of the watch-word. Lieutenant F—— and myself, after taking our scanty supper, lay down to repose under shelter of a gun-carriage; about twelve o'clock I was awakened by the serjeant of the guard, who informed me that lights were to be seen some distance at sea, undoubtedly from the vessels that were making signals to

each other. . Soon afterwards the gun-boat fired, as did also the Victoria; and from the stillness of the night, we could plainly hear the boatswain whistle, calling the ship's company to weigh anchor. I immediately dispatched a soldier to our camp to inform the Colonel; the gun-boat now kept up a continual firing, and we expected nothing less than that she was engaged, or that the enemy were landing. I ordered the men to their respective stations, and directed a gun to be unshotted and fired. This alarm was returned as before, from the places I have already mentioned; and more speedily communicated information to the Admiral and Colonel of what was going on, than the soldier I had dispatched.

Bryon soon arrived on horseback, attended by Arismendi's guard,* as did also my Colonel. As the firing was so often repeated, I

* This guard is about thirty strong; the men are equipped in the red clothing sent out for Colonel Wilson's Hussars; they are armed with a sword and carbine, which they fasten on by means of a piece of string. They have no idea of putting on their accoutrements in the manner of a soldier.

had previously to their arrival directed an eighteen-pounder, loaded with round and grape shot, to be moved to our rear, which was completely open; as I certainly then thought a landing had been effected by an enemy.

Troops shortly came hurrying in from all parts of the island, and in the space of an hour we had about fifteen hundred men at Juan Greigo. After all this preparation and bustle, it was discovered before day-light, by the Victoria, who had hoisted night-signals, that it was Commodore Jolie that was outside, with several large prizes, two of which were heavy ships. A boat was instantly dispatched from the flag-ship with this intelligence; and this alarming business, which originated with Commodore Jolie, (who had omitted to send information of his arrival, with an account of the number of vessels he had with him,) was concluded the next morning with a salute from the fleet and forts. The light brigade arrived in one of the large prizes, together with all our military stores, which were landed with considerable difficulty and labour, owing to the necessity of

sending every thing on shore in boats, which were obliged to come to an anchor some yards from the sand; in this manner the whole was discharged. The men employed, were continually three feet deep in the water.

A vessel was now dispatched to Angostura, on board of which were the representatives of the inhabitants of Margarita, who were repairing to the congress there convened: several officers of rank in the Independent army were also on board. They had no sooner arrived off the Orinoco, than perceiving a large ship to windward, which their fears alone convinced them was a Spanish ship of war, they crowded all their sail, put back to Margarita in the greatest consternation, and arrived to our no small astonishment and surprise.

Advices were received from the Patriot agents in the Colonies, that the Spanish fleet with troops from Cadiz had sailed, and that a part of them were destined for Margarita. Many faces assumed a serious aspect upon this information, and it was debated whether Admiral Bryon should sail with his fleet to attempt to intercept some of the transports,

or await their coming. The latter was determined upon, as his assistance would be more certain here, than if he were to sail in order to look for the enemy, whom it was most probable he might not encounter.

Margarita now presented a different appearance from what it had hitherto done, in regard to industry; for every individual, aware that we were not in a state to make a vigorous defence, and anticipating the fate that awaited him, should this intelligence prove true, incessantly exerted himself in co-operating for the security of the island. Councils of war were held frequently to a late hour at night, and the service of every man, capable of bearing arms, was put in requisition. As the coast is not a proper place for a park of artillery, it was determined that the brigade should be removed into the interior, where they would be more likely to be of service. The horses and mules of the island were collected for this purpose; but as they had never been used to draught, all attempts were fruitless to make them advance a step, and more than a month would have been required to break them in for this duty. The

mode of conveying burthens here, is upon the back of the animal; and I firmly believe, that previous to the arrival of our brigade, no carriage of any description had been used in Margarita, within the memory of the oldest inhabitant. In consequence of the failure of this attempt, about four hundred men were ordered for that service, who in the space of three days effected, with great difficulty, the transport of the brigade to the town of Norte, which I have already mentioned in my description of Margarita.

The whole of the military stores and provision were also sent into the interior, the greatest strength being concentrated near La Ciudad, or City of Ascencion. Bryon was to command that part of the coast near Juan Greigo; and the other principal officers were appointed to their several stations. Lieutenant-Colonel W——, who had upon our arrival at Margarita been appointed to the artillery, with that rank, remained at Juan Greigo to superintend the erection of a battery that was carrying on in advance of the old fort, and had been commenced upon our arrival, but was afterwards discontinued, in

order that the workmen and women, occupied on it, might be employed in building a house for Arismendi and Admiral Bryon; *a work which was certainly of greater importance* than that of raising fortifications. Therefore, upon the intelligence of the intended invasion of the Spaniards, all was hurry and confusion, totally contrary to the state of preparation in which we ought to have been upon any emergency. The construction of these necessary works, &c. would have been almost a source of amusement during the disagreeable period of inactivity, which led us to reflect too painfully on our miserable situation. Lieutenant B——, a North American officer, who had joined the artillery within only a few days, was left at Juan Greigo to assist Lieutenant-Colonel W——. Colonel G——, myself, one Lieutenant, and my friend, the Surgeon, (whom I have mentioned while at Angostura) with our detachment, marched for Norte. At this place one hundred natives were sent to join us; they were picked men from the Margarita battalions. For about a fortnight, seven hundred men were kept under arms night and day in the square

of Norte; but after this period the apprehension of the enemy's coming gradually wore away, though still a little more attention was paid to military operations and tactics than formerly.

Our time was now sufficiently occupied for two months in training these recruits, who had not the remotest idea of military subordination and discipline. However, to give them due credit, they were tractable beyond our expectations; and at the expiration of that time, a general review of the men of Margarita was fixed for the ensuing week, in which the artillery in particular were to go through their manœuvres. For this occasion great preparations were made; and the cavalry of the island, about three hundred in number, received most of them a sabre and a British marine's jacket;* in which, with the addition of a large straw hat, with a tuft of feathers, and their swords girded round them in a most awkward manner, they altogether presented the most ludicrous appearance. But very few of them had

* This surplus of clothing had been sent out by some of the military contractors on speculation.

saddles, and their horses were correspondent in every respect to the wretched equipment of the riders. I will insert a short account of this review, as it will give some idea of the troops of Margarita. At one of our evening parades, we received orders stating that it would take place on the succeeding morning at five o'clock; and a portion of ammunition was got in readiness for the occasion. It was not until seven o'clock that every thing was in readiness. The troops had been marching in since three o'clock. With the exception of one battalion of two hundred men, they were destitute of any uniform, and I may say almost of clothing.

The order in which they arrived was two and three deep. Father and son were together; and following close behind, in the interval, was the grand-son, carrying their provision, &c.; a great number of them were without muskets; and very few of those that had them, were in possession of the bayonet belonging to it. Our laboratory tent* was

* This is a large tent, which is always attached to an artillery depôt, for the artillerymen to make up their ammunition, and fill their shells in.

pitched at the end of the square, at the door of which was placed a large table, covered with a crimson velvet cloth,* richly decorated with gold.

The Governor (General Gomez), and Arismendi, took their seats at this table, and the question was put to each of us as we passed singly in rotation, if we had any complaint to prefer; and our names were entered (as citizens) in the military books. Our answer was not very consonant to our feelings; yet it would have been to no purpose to have uttered a complaint, as that would have only rendered our situation more unpleasant, and perhaps seriously grievous.

This tedious process lasted until two o'clock, and in the afternoon we were ordered out to manœuvre. After going through the brigade duties, with great credit to our recruits, the cavalry and infantry were ranged in order of battle, and we opened a brisk fire upon them; at length the cavalry, elated with a scene so unusual to them, charged our guns, thinking to throw us into confusion;

* This was evidently a prize taken out of some church

but they met with so warm a reception, that the results of it occasioned us the greatest mirth for some time, as it fully proved the mettle and discipline of their animals. They commenced the attack, and were greeted with the discharge of our guns in all directions; each piece firing independently. As soon as the smoke cleared away and rendered objects distinguishable, we perceived a great number of horses lying in the dust in front of our guns, apparently deprived of all motion. At first we were tempted to believe that we had done some serious mischief, but in a short lapse of time we were agreeably undeceived; for it proved that the close connexion they had had with us, had not been so interesting, or redounded so much to their honour, as they had anticipated. We readily concluded that the present was the first occasion on which the horses or riders had been manœuvring with artillery. This last disgrace of the cavalry closed the review for that day; and the officers of the artillery, together with the commanders of the different battalions, were invited to dine with General

Arismendi, who appeared delighted with the progress of our recruits, to whom he caused a small sum of money to be distributed.

The next day the whole of the troops were reviewed by General Arismendi and Admiral Bryon; and the salutes, &c. customary on those occasions, were performed by the Independents, though in a manner which would have appeared highly ridiculous to any British regiment.

The artillery, which was manœuvred by drag ropes, was preceded by Governor Gomez, in advance of whom were two ragamuffin drummers; immediately in our rear followed the infantry, and, to close the line of march, the *impregnable* cavalry I have mentioned: in this order we marched in ordinary time past the Generals, to whom we paid the usual compliment. As soon as the whole of the troops had passed, the artillery (after making a long circuit) were ordered to take up their original ground, where we untimbered and fired a salute, which closed this *grand* review.

We were now invited to a late breakfast, prepared for the occasion, at the house of

General Arismendi, who again, as did Bryon, expressed great delight and approbation at the remarkable progress of our brigade.

Some time after this a most dreadful fever broke out in Margarita, which was attended with a greater mortality than had ever been known. If I say that in the space of five weeks, two hundred and fifty souls (men, women, and children,) fell victims to its ravages, I am confident that I speak according to the lowest estimates.

It at last arrived to that infectious extent, that recourse was had to precautions equal to those attendant on a plague, but without effect. No communication, except on the most indispensable and important military affairs, was allowed between the part of the island in rear of the Ciudad, and that on the side of Norte and Juan Greigo. General Arismendi, who had, from the time the artillery were ordered to Norte resided entirely at his house there, now repaired with his wife to Juan Greigo, as that part was yet healthy.

An anecdote related by the natives of Margarita, with seeming exultation, and with

the most solemn asseverations of fact concerning this General, may not be uninteresting. In an attack made by the Royalists on Margarita, the wife of Arismendi (then about twenty years of age) fell into the hands of the enemy, near La Ciudad, together with several other females. At the same time, a Royalist Colonel of distinction was made prisoner by the Patriots. An exchange was proposed by Morillo, to whom Arismendi sent this reply:—That he declined the terms, and that ere the morning sun, the head of the Royalist Colonel would be exposed to his view in front of the Independent troops; which barbarous threat was carried into execution. Arismendi must undoubtedly have expected that his wife would share the same fate; yet the retaliation was not made in blood. She was sent as a prisoner to Spain, where she was condemned to slavery; and, according to the information we heard, was made a common scavenger in the streets of Cadiz; from which place she effected her escape, with the assistance, and under the generous and honourable protection of a Captain of a vessel from the United States, who procured her a pas-

sage to Margarita, where she now lives with her husband.

The affection he evinced for her was certainly *very great;* yet, this is not an age for those Roman characters who sacrificed their dearest and most tender affections where it would contribute to the welfare of the empire,—considering the general character of Arismendi, we may conclude that this action was more the result of a wish to gratify his propensity for cruelty and hatred to the Spaniards than of zeal in the cause of the Republic. His sanguinary disposition is so well known to Bolivar, that he is appointed to the command in Margarita, to prevent him as far as possible from committing those cruelties, which Bolivar always, if possible, avoids. Arismendi has never been known to spare an enemy; and it is fortunate for the Spaniards that he is not employed on actual service. He has frequently expressed himself in the following manner to us:—"Never lend an ear of pity to the supplicating voice of an enemy, but plunge the unrelenting sword into the bosom of all that have any connexion with Ferdinand, regardless alike of the tears of

the widow, the mother, and the offspring of a Royalist." Another proof of his implacable enmity to the Royalists, is the following horrid and blasphemous vow he is constantly making: That if in heaven he were to meet with one, he would instantly solicit his passport to another world;—for he protests that where there is a Spaniard, a perfect hell must reign.

Previous to the fever that broke out in Margarita, Commodore Jolie (who had the rank of Admiral conferred upon him by Bryon) sailed on a cruize with the fleet, having hoisted his flag on board the Victoria. Bryon put his flag on board one of the large prizes, mentioned as having been taken by Jolie, which was now converted into a guard and store ship, and mounted two old nine-pounders.

My friend, the French Doctor, procured a passage in the fleet to St. Bartholomew's, as did also Lieutenant F——. They both left the service in disgust, determining to seek some more lucrative employment in the Colonies. The loss I sustained in so valuable and respectable a friend as the former gentleman, for

whom I entertained a most sincere friendship, was a severe blow. I had now no companion with whom I could converse, and in whose conversation I could take pleasure; and every thing appeared melancholy around me. The fever had found its way into the brigade, and the natives were daily falling victims to its malignancy. I attended the interment of one of our English soldiers who was a Roman Catholic. To prevent infection, as soon as he had ceased to breathe, he was tied up in his blanket and removed out of the barracks into the air. Colonel G—— then ordered me to acquaint the Commandant of the village of his decease, in order that a shell might be instantly made to bury him in. This was refused; and we were directed to inter him immediately in the best manner we could. Indignant at this disrespect of a British soldier, Colonel G—— dispatched a native officer, named Gonsalvas, who had been admitted into the brigade in order to be instructed in the artillery duties, to request the priest would, as the deceased was a Catholic, see that the usual ceremony was performed.

The answer we received was, that the priest would at a future time put up his prayers for him, but that at present we must lose no time in committing him to the earth. Accordingly, without further solicitation or permission, we dug a hole behind the church, and there deposited the body. The natives loudly protested against this proceeding as a sacrilege. We had nearly filled up the grave, when I perceived Gonsalvas hastening to the spot, attended by a party of natives, bearing two immense and unwieldly earth-rammers. They approached the grave, and were proceeding to take out the earth already returned to its original place. From this unaccountable and infamous step, I peremptorily desired them to desist, and we were upon the point of giving them a rough salute, when a messenger from those bigoted fanatics, as also another from the commandant, insisted upon our compliance with their commands. As it would be fruitless to make any further opposition, I ordered the detachment to their barracks, and quitted these uncivilized brutes, whose countenances expressed a grin of satisfaction at being able

to act with impunity. They took the whole of the earth out again, and having sprinkled it about an inch deep over the body, two of them took their stations at the head and feet, and commenced breaking the bones of the deceased, until they had pounded them to a jelly. This is their barbarous and savage manner of burial; for they never raise their graves above the level of the ground, consequently all must go into the smallest space, to effect which, the body is pounded in the manner I have described; after which several heavy stones are placed upon the grave, to prevent as they say the defunct from *visiting the earth again.*

The house or hut in which I was quartered with Lieutenant B—— (who had been ordered to the Norte from Juan Greigo), was situated about twenty paces from the church. A numerous and dirty family resided in this hovel, which contained three miserable apartments, destitute of the least appearance of furniture, with the exception of two or three filthy hammocks, in which they were constantly swinging. One miserable room was allotted to the use of my companion and my-

self: a feeble light was admitted through a wooden grating at the end of this apartment; but in order to render objects distinguishable, we were obliged to throw open our door communicating with the apartment occupied by the family. The floor was of mud or clay on which I laid my bed (which was a straw mat), to purchase which I had sold some of my remaining things. It was now completely worn out by a long encampment at Juan Greigo, where it was exposed in general with every article in my possession to the nightly rain, which penetrated my old and tattered tent, as it would a sieve. One evening, about a fortnight after the interment of the artilleryman I have mentioned, I seriously apprehended from a violent pain in my head (that being the first symptom) that the fever had at last seized me; and I accordingly, by the advice I had often received from my friend (the French doctor), took a copious draught of lime juice, as hot as I could well bear it, in order to produce perspiration and check the disorder, which it will frequently do if taken in time, but without success. By midnight I was in a raging state of delirium,

which continued with little intermission for seventy-two hours, and at the expiration of that period the fever arrived at its crisis. The breaking out of a wound in my leg which had been healed up too quickly, and which with several others had originated from bad living, and the venomous bites of musquitoes, gave a favourable turn to the disorder. To this providential circumstance, and to the attention shown me by an old negro-woman, I principally owe the preservation of my life. That humane creature, without the most distant expectation of being rewarded for her exemplary goodness, procured for me several little comforts for which she could ill afford to pay, and attended me with maternal affection. Of her unceasing solicitude and effectual care, I shall ever retain a most grateful remembrance. After the malignancy of my fever had subsided, and I was pronounced out of danger by Doctor Monkhouse,* who had occasionally

* This gentleman came out in the Imogene brig, now the Libertador, and was made Inspector of the Hospital at Margarita. He died of the fever about a fortnight after the above period, and was buried under a manchineel tree on the sand at Juan Greigo.

attended me, Admiral Bryon, being then at Norte, did me the honour of a visit; and upon entering the room and seeing my miserable situation, exclaimed with apparent astonishment, "Good God, Captain Brown, have you no other than that wretched mat for your bed? And is this the only place that can be procured for an invalid, and an officer in the service of the Republic? Have no wine and other necessaries, so essential for you, been sent by the order of General Arismendi?" These inquiries I answered in the negative: he expressed his sorrow at such neglect, and promised to send me a hammock and a sufficient supply of those things which were indispensable to my recovery immediately. As I did not entertain a doubt that he would keep his word, I made an effort to return my respectful and grateful thanks for his kindness: yet no sooner had he quitted my quarters than the miserable situation in which he had left me was forgotten; and the dictates of common humanity, together with the promises which, even if he had not made them, it was his duty to have seen fulfilled to us, were disregarded. Hitherto I had entertained a good opinion of

Bryon; but this act, with his subsequent behaviour, entirely changed it, and confirmed me in the belief that no confidence could be reposed in his most solemn protestations.

To add to my wretched situation, my companion was now seized with the same disorder, as was also my servant; and we were now deprived of all attendance, the men being all more or less sick, so as to be incapable of affording us any assistance. A complete plague reigned at this time at Norte: and our ears were saluted hourly by the tolling of the church bell, announcing that some poor wretch had breathed his last.

It required the greatest exertion on my part to enable me to totter, with the support of a stick, to the bed-side of my friend; and as the old negro woman now only occasionally visited us, the task fell upon me to administer to him the little medicines and proper sustenance we could procure. Colonel Gilmore was also very ill, and confined to his quarters. At this time all duty whatever was at a stand with the brigade in regard to the natives: yet our few Englishmen, worn out as they were with sickness and bad living, were compelled

to mount guard over the guns; for which service there were not three effective men amongst them.

One morning, in returning to my pallet from the bed-side of my friend, I perceived through the wooden grating four of our artillerymen bearing the body of my faithful servant to its last abode in the fields; the priests having issued a peremptory order, that the heretics, as they termed the English, should not be buried in consecrated grounds. This melancholy sight agitated me greatly, as I was not prepared for it, but was expecting momentarily that I should have to close the eyes of my friend, who feebly asked the reason of my apparent emotion. I evaded his question as well as I was able; knowing that the communication of the truth would only render him worse, and would probably be attended with dangerous consequences. But my intention of keeping it secret was frustrated by an old rough veteran soldier, who without much ceremony entered to inform me of the death of my servant, and to bring his last and dying wishes for my recovery, with his grateful thanks for the assistance I had afforded

him in his illness, which, poor fellow, was but trifling, as little was then in my power.

I was seriously afraid that this abrupt manner of announcing my servant's death, would have rendered my friend hopeless and despairing of his fate; yet I was happy to find that the impression was not so great as I had expected.

As I recovered from the fever, my leg got gradually worse; and I resolved to take this opportunity of soliciting my passport from the service. Accordingly I addressed to Bryon, then commanding the artillery, in conformity to Bolivar's orders, a letter couched in term of regret at being under the necessity of demanding my dismissal from under the Independent standard, in consequence of the impaired state of my constitution, and expressing my opinion that it would be a long time before I could so far re-establish my health, if I remained in South America, as to render my service of any benefit to the Republic. I also begged his Excellency to take into his consideration the time I had been under the standard of Liberty, without receiving any emolument from the government; adding,

that as he must be well aware that I was destitute of all resources in a pecuniary point of view, I trusted he would afford me some assistance in facilitating my passage to my native country.

This letter I dispatched for the perusal of Colonel Gillmore, who kindly undertook to deliver it himself to Admiral Bryon, and also to add a word or two in my favour. He at the same time politely expressed his regret that my ill health was likely to deprive him of my services; but, that whatever unwillingness he might have, he should accord his consent, as it was my wish; and he would use all the interest in his power, so to arrange things, that my passage home might be as comfortable and respectable as possible. He did not doubt that the Admiral would, without the least hesitation, liberally accede to my just request.

The answer I received from Bryon was, that every thing I had demanded, should be complied with; and that I should be supplied with the means of paying for my passage to England as soon as I was sufficiently recovered to proceed. To these promises on his part Colonel Gillmore and Lieutenant

Colonel W—— were witnesses; and he likewise testified to them his regret that Captain Brown's health rendered it necessary for him to return to Europe, but added that care should be taken that he should not leave Margarita without being afforded ample means to ensure a passage to his country. This pleasing intelligence contributed more to my recovery than any medical aid could possibly have done; and I now pleased myself with the idea of being already on that happy island where I should soon forget my past misery and hardships, in the pleasing society of my friends. Yet in the midst of these delightful reveries, a gloomy thought would frequently obtrude itself. I had repeatedly written, and never received any tidings in return. I have since learnt, that many letters were sent me; for the miscarriage of which, it is impossible to account in any other way, than that they were intercepted, as the purport of them always was to urge my return.

I had now recovered from the violent effects of the fever; and being able, with the assistance of one of the soldiers, to walk to the outside of my quarters, I usually passed the great-

er part of the day under the shade of a tree, where a chair was placed for my convenience.

Early one morning I had observed the signal for three ships flying upon the fort;* and in the afternoon, another signal was made that they were coming to Juan Greigo. About five o'clock, the colours being rendered undistinguishable by the approach of evening, the drum beat to arms, in order that we might be on our guard against any sudden attack. As the vessels in no respect resembled Jolie's squadron, their appearance excited great surprise. About eight o'clock in the evening, intelligence arrived at Norte, that the strange vessels had come to an anchor in the bay of Juan Greigo, and were English ships, having on board two thousand British troops for the service of the Patriots.

The next morning we found that the ac-

* This fort is situated on a high eminence close to the town of Norte, but at present there is only one heavy gun mounted. It is principally intended for a signal-post and as a telegraph to La Ciudad, for those vessels that appear off Juan Griego. There is also another dismantled battery, which commands the roads from Juan Greigo, and is about half a mile in advance to the coast.

counts given us the preceding evening had been greatly exaggerated; and instead of two thousand British soldiers to co-operate with the Independents, it was found that this force was part of the troops raised by Colonel English, who had entrusted them to the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Blosset, and that their utmost strength did not exceed four hundred.

These deluded men disembarked the day after their arrival, in full expectation of receiving their promised bounty of eighty Spanish dollars each private, and two hundred dollars the officers. They already fancied their fortunes made on setting their feet on shore in a country which they, as well as ourselves, had been given to understand, was absolutely inundated with money. Their disappointment was consequently great when they received for their rations a little salt-fish and bad biscuit, without any mention made of their bounty or even pay. They were crowded into old tents and under trees exposed to the scorching heat of the sun, and with difficulty did they procure their wretched rations. On the first evening of their landing [illegible]

men discovering the manner in which they had been deceived, became clamorous in their complaints, which had nearly led to serious consequences, as they broke out into open mutiny; and were with difficulty appeased by a promise that their situation should be speedily bettered, and that they should receive part of their bounty immediately. The Angostura scene was now acted over again by their officers, who were obliged, in order to enable them to procure common necessaries, to send out their servants with their apparel for sale, for which they could get but a trifle in exchange, as the inhabitants of Margarita are not much overburthened with money. The troops under the orders of Lieutenant-Colonel Blosset, presented a most wretched appearance; they were destitute of all military clothing or appointment, which tney gave us to understand was to follow them; they were for the most part in rags, and those that had any thing tolerably decent, were compelled to part with it to purchase food, as their present rations were so different from what they expected, that they could not, like us who were now inured to patriotic living,

consent to subsist on them so long as it was possible, at the expense of stripping themselves to their last article of apparel, to procure any thing more congenial to their former manner of living. The equipments of the officers were elegant, yet not expensive; their uniform was a light-blue jacket and trowsers, in the Hussar style, with red or black facings, the front was worked with silk; and their shacos or caps were also of the same materials, with a bushy yellow or green plume. The cap was ornamented with a silver plate, with an appropriate device explanatory of the service in which they had engaged. Their accoutrements were black, with a neat sabre; upon the whole, this dress was more calculated for the climate (being of a light and cool texture) than had hitherto appeared in South America, and evinced great judgment on the part of him who had ordered it.

The fever soon spread among the new comers; and the hospital, half way between Juan Greigo and Norte, which had been appointed for them, was shortly filled with sick, numbers of whom breathed their last only a few days after their arrival in this ill-

fated country; in which they had formed sanguine expectations of shortly accumulating a fortune.

After an encampment of about fourteen days at Juan Greigo, they were ordered to Pampatar; on their arrival at their new quarters nothing but dissension took place; and continual alarms pervaded the breasts of the inhabitants as to what might be the result of the discontent manifested by *los Ingleses*, as they termed the British troops, at their shameful reception and treatment. Yet, all things considered, they met with a much better than we did, who had preceded them in 1817. The fever still continued to make considerable ravages in Colonel Blosset's corps, as well as in every part of the island, and two of the medical officers, lately arrived, fell victims to its malignancy: this was an irreparable loss to the corps, as at this time ninety men, nearly a fourth of the total force, were confined to the hospital.

A sloop was now dispatched to endeavour to find the Independent squadron, in order to recall them from their cruize, as prepara-

tions were making for an expedition destined for the opposite coast.

During this time I was gradually recovering my strength; but the wound in my leg enlarged greatly; and as I was destitute of all medical advice while my manner of living tended to encrease my danger, I became urgent to depart to the British Colonies. As soon therefore as I could with safety mount a horse, (for the hire of which, amounting to a dollar, I was obliged to sell some article or other, (I proceeded to the Admiralty in order to have some conversation with Bryon relative to my departure. He referred me to his Secretary, Colonel Richards, who returned me my memorial, (requesting my dismission,) in the margin of which was written a note, purporting that all my requests should be fulfilled, &c.; but as no money was then in the treasury, I must postpone my departure a few days. The exertion I had made this day so affected my leg, that it confined me to my wretched bed for the succeeding seven days; during which time the people of Margarita were alarmed by the appearance of the Spanish squadron, com-

sisting of the Nymph corvette, with two heavy brigs, and a schooner, that had come to an anchor in a bay near an uninhabited part of the island. As the Independent squadron were absent, they remained in uninterrupted possession of their anchorage; and great fears were entertained for the safety of the Patriot fleet, in case they should come off the island separately. Three days after the Spanish squadron had been discovered lying off the land, Jolie arrived with his fleet; and preparations were made, though in a very dilatory manner, for going out to attack them. One hundred and fifty men, of Colonel Blosset's corps, were put on board the fleet to act as marines, and in *three days* this force sailed under the command of Bryon.

We now hourly expected the Nymph, that terror to the Independent fleet, to be brought as a prize into the bay of Juan Greigo; yet a week elapsed and no tidings of the squadron were received.

I again hired a horse to Juan Greigo, and waited upon Colonel Richards to see if I could now procure any money; but my astonishment was great when he informed me

that nothing could be done until the Admiral returned. I then demanded an audience of General Arismendi, and requested him to point out some manner in which I could hasten my departure; as I was given to understand by a medical officer, that if I did not speedily procure proper attendance, and adopt a different diet, I should inevitably lose my life, or must suffer the limb to be amputated. Arismendi said that he could do nothing for me in a pecuniary way, unless I had some proof of Bryon's promises. This I informed him I would give him, but that I had left the necessary document at Norte, and that I would produce it in a few hours. I accordingly returned to Norte with alacrity, and in great spirits, thinking that I had now settled every thing, and was in a fair way of bidding adieu for ever to this ungrateful and wretched set of people. I stopped at the quarters of Colonel G——, (who was confined to his bed) and stated to him the reason of my hasty return. He also, in order to render every thing secure and satisfactory beyond a doubt, wrote a letter to General Arismendi, wherein he said that in addition to the undoubted ac-

cordance which Bryon had placed in writing in my memorial, he and Lieut.-Colonel W—— were also witnesses as to Bryon's verbal assurance to them, that I should be allowed ample means for returning to England, and that he begged his Excellency General Arismendi would expedite my departure, as his Excellency must necessarily see the dangerous state to which I was reduced. With this letter and my memorial, I returned to Juan Greigo, and dismounted at Arismendi's house from my horse, now jaded by this second journey in one day to Juan Greigo. I delivered to General Arismendi the proofs he had required, as to what I had already mentioned, as also the letter of Colonel G——. Fortunately Lieut.-Colonel W—— was with Arismendi, and protested that Bryon had repeatedly made those promises.

My surprise and indignation were consequently great, when Arismendi, who now saw that there was sufficient proof to authorize him to pay me a sum of money, (even on Bryon's private account, without mentioning my just claims on the Republic,) declared that he could not grant me even my passport,

and that I must memorialize the Supreme Chief (Bolivar), then at Angostura. These words, which were delivered with a kind of malicious smile, as if he gloried in rendering an heretic miserable, were to me as a sentence of death; for I knew that it would be at least six weeks before I could gain an answer from Angostura, even if an opportunity should immediately present itself to send my memorial, which at that time was not in the least to be expected. Lieut.-Colonel W—— attempted to remonstrate with Arismendi on the certain results of my detention, but without effect; and I retired with him with no very enviable feelings; and, as may be expected, with sentiments far from favourable towards him who had caused them. Yet this was not all that I had to suffer; for from that time my rations, as well as the wretched pittance allowed me, were withheld; and had it not been for the fortunate resource I had in a gentleman, at the island of St. Thomas, on whom I drew a bill, which was cashed by a brother-in-law of Jolie's (Mons. Peno), who had connexions at that island, I must have inevitably perished for want. I returned to

Norte; and repaired to the quarters of Colonel G——, who expressed great sorrow and indignation at the reatment I had experienced, and protested that if my passport was not granted, he would demand his own, as it was an affair that now interested every Englishman.

Arismendi, however, was inexorable; and from the time I had demanded my passport, he evinced the greatest abhorrence of me, though previous to that time he had shown me most decided marks of condescension and affability. Thus it is with most of the native characters of the Republic, who, while an Englishman will remain a willing slave to their caprice and tyranny, may sometimes greet him with a smile, though nothing more can be expected from them. My only chance of effecting a departure from this service, for which every day tended to increase my dislike, rested on the hope of Bryon's speedy return; since, as the Colonel justly observed, he was bound in the most sacred bonds of honour, to do away with all impediments that might be thrown in the way to prevent my immediate departure.

A month elapsed, and yet there was no appearance of the Independent fleet; and during the interval, was I living in the greatest misery. About this period, a British sloop of war arrived at Margarita to make enquiries respecting a vessel under the Artigas colours, that had committed great depredations in a piratical manner, and had fired into an English ship, the Captain of which had been killed.

The commander of the pirate was named Daniels, (Commodore Daniels, as he styled himself). The British stated that they had been ordered from England at very short notice, and had heard various tidings of her, and had traced her course to Margarita, where they had hoped to fall in with her; their orders being to take her as a prize, and her crew as prisoners to England. My first impulse, as soon as I heard of the arrival of a British man of war, was a determination, by every possible means, to interest the commander of her in my behalf, and procure a passage to the first port or island she made: yet if I had deliberated an instant, I should have seen the impropriety and utter impossi-

bility of accomplishing my intention; as the commander would undoubtedly have told me that he could not accede to my request unless I obtained a passport, and that I had in a manner forfeited the protection of the British laws, by engaging in a prohibited service. Of that prohibition indeed we were not aware until it was too late, and had flattered ourselves that a tacit assent had been given to our proceedings. Suffice it to say, that when I arrived at Juan Greigo, whither I had instantly proceeded, I recollected that the discovery of the attempt would expose me to dangerous consequences, and that there were but faint hopes of success. I therefore returned again to Norte, in an extremely dejected state of mind. The British sloop of war sailed the next day, and on the succeeding one, the very pirate that she had come in search of, arrived, bringing in a Royalist brig of war that she had taken, off the river La Plata, after an action of thirty-five minutes, during which time they were almost alongside each other. Fifty-four of the brig's people were killed before she struck, and eighty then surrendered themselves prisoners, and, accord-

ing to the account given us by the conquerors, were put on shore. A few days afterwards, a brig under the Buenos-Ayres flag came to an anchor in the bay; and now the flags of the then contending parties, Artigas and Buenos-Ayres, were seen flying in the same harbour. Commodore Daniels, from a hope of eluding the hands of justice, accepted an offer made him by Arismendi, of a commission under the flag of the Venezuelan Republic, and received orders to proceed in a few days to look for the squadron under Bryon, and join him. This proceeding did not meet with the approbation of the crew belonging to the pirate, who did not wish to engage themselves in any service, as it would prevent them from resuming at pleasure their former piratical cruizes; nor did they wish to have any sharers with them in their prize-money.

The result of this step was, that they permitted the crew of the Buenos-Ayres brig to come on board them in the night, after which they cut their cable and ran out of the bay. Three shots were fired at the brig before she could get out, but without doing her any

damage. The next morning at day-break Commodore Daniels (who was on shore) embarked with a strong party of men on board his Spanish man-of-war prize, and went out to look for the fugitive brig, having determined to engage her should he come up with her, and either recover her or perish in the attempt. After a fruitless chase (as he had kept her in sight), he returned with his vessel to her moorings; and gave up all idea of recovering the brig, it being conjectured that the men would steer for Baltimore, in the United States, where she had been fitted out, and deliver her to the owners. Yet most probably they would take to their old course of pirating. I learnt from one of the officers of the privateer, who had previously quitted her because his prize-money had been withheld, the particulars of the affair relative to the British merchant ship, which had exposed them to seizure, and to the treatment and fate of pirates. Commodore Daniels gave chase to the vessel in question one morning, and in a few hours came up with her; she was hailed and ordered to bring to, which the Captain refused to comply with; a gun

was then ordered by Commodore Daniels to be cleared away and fired. The Captain of the English vessel was then on the quarter-deck, and was killed on the spot by the wad from the gun, they being at that time nearly alongside of each other:—Commodore Daniels seeing the danger to which he was now subjected by this act, repaired on board (as she had now brought to) with his surgeon, to render assistance to the Captain, who, he was not then aware, was quite dead. My informant also stated, that Daniels expressed great sorrow for the *accident*, as he termed it, and made enquiries of the mate relative to the family of the deceased; and asked whether it would be in his power to meliorate the distress of the widow, &c. He also wrote a letter to her, in which he lamented this tragic occurrence; but at the same time declared that his order to his gunner had been to fire over her, as is customary on the first summons to lay to, and not into her; and that the disobedience of this his positive order had caused the death of the English Captain.

Two days after the mutiny on board Commodore Daniels' brig, the Independent fleet

arrived; but not in company with the Spanish fleet as prizes, which they had rendered themselves so certain of taking. They had suffered severely from a heavy squall that they had encountered off the coast of the Main: the Victoria had lost one of her top-masts, and had sprung a leak that rendered it necessary to take all her guns and stores out immediately. The other vessels had also suffered so materially, that it was necessary for them to undergo a thorough refit. The Independent fleet had not performed any very extraordinary action during their long cruize. They had traced the Royalist vessels into Cumana, in which port had they blockaded them, until the arrival of some of the Patriot gun-boats, they might with their strong force have succeeded in taking them. Instead of this they proceeded to Santa Fé, near La Guayra, and destroyed by fire a few miserable houses, a quantity of salted fish, and some small salt-works: the few Royalists in the town seeing so formidable a force, precipitately retreated into the interior. During this time the commanders of the Nymph and other vessels, which I have mentioned, aware

that it was practicable for the Patriots to have taken them out of the harbour of Cumana, seized the favourable opportunity occasioned by the negligence of the Independents, and ran into the harbour of La Guayra, where they could laugh at their enemies should they then attempt any thing. In this situation were they seen shortly after by Bryon, to his great surprise, on his leaving Santa Fé, where he had remained some time to water his fleet.

General Urdenata, General Valdes, and their staff, arrived about this period from Angostura; the former was to command the expedition from this place, destined for the Main, and composed of the British troops, artillery, and a battalion of natives. No sooner was the arrival of these two Generals known, and the errand they came upon, than our native artillerymen, to the number of one hundred, took their arms and deserted to the mountains, resolving not to proceed on any expedition from the island, saying that they should be served in the same manner as Marino's men (never suffered to return); but that it might be very well for the English

troops to go, as they had no tie to keep them. So much for the zeal, enthusiasm, and sentiments of nearly five thousand of the Republicans! A brigade of artillery now no longer existed in Margarita, and nothing but discontent pervaded the minds of both the British and natives. The conduct of the latter was tacitly connived at by Arismendi, who had expected to command the intended expedition; an assemblage however of the men of Margarita was called at Norte, and the orders of Bolivar with regard to the expedition were communicated. To a man did they refuse either to quit the island, or decide it by casting lots; in consequence of which refusal their officers were confined. This last affair of the desertion of our brigade rendered me still more anxious to quit a service, in which no system of discipline or obedience to the orders of a Commander-in-Chief was observed; and I repaired to Juan Greigo, to receive, as I imagined, my passport, and the means of accomplishing my return to England. Bryon informed me that I must now memorialize General Urdenata for my passport; which when I had procured he would

see me again. I immediately wrote a memorial, much to the same purport as the first one, to which I again procured the sanction of Colonel G——. Yet I now almost despaired of effecting my departure for the Colonies; and the wound in my leg had so augmented in size and pain, that it was with the most excruciating torture I could walk the distance of twenty yards. In this state, and upon my own expense, they had the cruelty to detain me for some weeks longer; and no notice was taken of my repeated enquiries, whether I should receive my passport or not, and my situation was now desperate both as to my health and finances.

The Traveller brig, Captain Lloyd, from Demerara, bound to London, having sprung a leak at sea, was obliged, from the quantity of water she made, to put into Juan Greigo in distress. And Captain Lloyd had repeatedly told me that he should feel great pleasure in taking me on board, as soon as I should receive my passport. He further said, that as he should be obliged to put into some West-India island, probably St. Thomas, to complete what repairs might be wanting, (though

he thought that the leak was now securely caulked,) yet he would not leave the Colonies without having a survey passed on board, and during that time I might take the opportunity of laying in my sea stock. With respect to the passage, he generously declared he would not receive a fraction from me, as he considered it an act of duty and humanity to assist his countrymen, in facilitating their emancipation from such misery as that in which he could plainly discover we were placed. He also said, that should I upon arriving in the Colonies want pecuniary aid, he placed so much confidence in my honour, that I should freely share his purse. For this unbounded generosity on his part, I expressed my most fervent thanks and gratitude, and said I would avail myself of his offers to the Colonies, provided I received my passport; as I hoped I should there meet with letters of credit to enable me to get those necessaries I so much wanted, as also my sea stock; and I would then make some arrangements with him as to my passage.

News was now received that General Paes was retreating down the Apure, hard pressed by Morillo, who had obliged the Inde-

pendents to evacuate San Fernando de Apure; previous to which they had destroyed the greater part of it by fire.

About a week after the return of the fleet to Margarita, Colonel English arrived with his transports in the bay of Juan Greigo, one of which, however, was near falling into the hands of the Royalists. This vessel, in steering for Margarita, was not aware of the strength of the current several leagues from the island, and had kept her course too much away. In the morning she had fallen several miles to leeward of the harbour, and was drifting rapidly over to the opposite shore. A schooner was dispatched to her assistance; yet great fear was entertained that she might either get on the rocks, as she was then on a dangerous part of the coast, or fall into the power of the Royalists. However, in the space of two days, she beat into the bay, to the great relief and satisfaction of those on board. Colonel English was attended by about four hundred and fifty rank and file, with a great proportion of officers. Their reception and appearance were correspondent in every

respect to those of the first division that had preceded them. They had brought out a tolerable band, yet nothing in comparison to that which had come out with the rifle corps, and which was now dispersed in the colonies; some of them having joined the British West-India regiments. Colonel Gillmore received his commission and appointment from General Bolivar, through the medium of General Urdenata, as Brigadier-General; and was appointed as chief of the staff. General Valdes, whose arrival I have mentioned, took upon him, in conformity to Bolivar's order, the civil government of Margarita. General Gomez (late Governor) was ordered to attend the expedition. in command of a party of the natives, and preparations were made for that purpose on the part of the British. Yet our brigade, and in fact the whole of the natives destined to depart, still continued in the mountains, and bade defiance to all orders that were issued for their immediate mustering. Through such conduct, and by this reluctance to perform their duty of leading the way to the thickest of the battle, they opened a fine

prospect to those who were to march into the field with them. The sons of Margarita, who had been held up as the heroes and the liberators of the new world, fled to the mountains when summoned to the onset, and basely refused to accompany their allies, the British, to the opposite coast. Colonel English, according to the conditional promise held out to him by Bolivar if he should return with a reinforcement, received the rank of General of Brigade, and under Urdenata was to command the expedition in view.

I again importuned the General for my passport, and at last he promised that I should receive it the next day. However another week passed, and an embargo was to be laid in a few days, which I was given to understand would continue in force for two months, or until their preparations should be completed. This information induced me to make a last solicitation for my passport; determining, in case of refusal, to demand it as a British subject, and declare my most solemn resolution, even if I recovered, never again to unsheath a sword in the service. My situation had become now so insup-

portable, that I was careless as to the fate that such a disclosure of my sentiments might draw upon me. Fortunately however I received my passport the next morning, and immediately repaired to Bryon to inform him of it, (according to his desire). He received me with coolness; and perceiving me waiting in expectation of some reply, he demanded in a surly manner if I had any thing further to say to him. Stung to the soul by so mean an evasion, I replied,—"Yes, Admiral, you cannot possibly have forgot the pecuniary aid you promised me in order to procure a return to that country, in quitting which, I have sacrificed so much to contribute the little assistance in my power to the service of the Republic; and the compensation for all my sufferings and privations is now the probable loss of a limb. You are aware of my present situation, and my utter inability to procure those indispensable necessaries of which I am entirely destitute; and you know also that since the time of my demanding my passport, I have been deprived of the small pittance and wretched rations until then allowed me; and had it

not been for the assistance I obtained from a friend, I must have inevitably have perished for want." I was now upon the point of retiring, when he said that he would endeavour to procure for me my arrears of ration money, as he was not aware I had been deprived of it.

I now quitted him without replying to his latter promises, and repaired to Colonel G—, then at Juan Greigo; to whom I related the infamous treatment I had experienced from Bryon, and gave vent to those invectives against the Republic, which its ingratitude, and the conduct of most of its chiefs drew from me, and which I had with difficulty suppressed while in the presence of Admiral Bryon.

The Traveller brig was to sail that afternoon, in order to escape the embargo. General Urdenata sent me an order on the Commissary for the arrears of my ration money, which my urgent and destitute situation peremptorily demanded that I should accept. These few cut dollars I could not procure in time; and had it not been for the kindness of Lieutenant-Colonel W——, who

gave me a part of the sum, and made himself responsible to pay for the few necessaries that I had procured as a sea stock to St. Thomas, I must have embarked without it. Colonel G.—— kindly procured for me two or three soldiers' shirts; as my baggage, with respect to articles of apparel, was now reduced to what I had on. After bidding farewell, and receiving the sincere wishes of Colonel G——, Lieutenant-Colonel W——, and a few other officers, from whom I had experienced the greatest kindness, I embarked on board the Traveller, and with a sensation of joy beyond description found myself once more under the protection of the British flag.

We experienced some difficulties ere we quitted the bay, on account of an English soldier, one of the new comers, who had concealed himself on board, without the knowledge of the Captain, but by the connivance of the crew; this being discovered, a guard of marines was sent on board from the Victoria, and we were brought to an anchor outside of the harbour, in a very dangerous birth near some rocks. The Captain was taken on shore, where he was detained thirty-six hours,

at the expiration of which period he was permitted to return on board, when we immediately weighed anchor. I was not entirely without apprehensions of being recalled on shore during the time of our detention, and consequently was most happy when I saw the mountains of Margarita gradually losing their outline in the distance. The leak burst out again when we launched into the troubled sea; and our utmost exertions at the pump every quarter of an hour, scarcely kept her free. At the end of ten days we came to an anchor in the harbour of St. Thomas; and there, when the vessel was discharged of her cargo, and hove down to be examined, we ascertained the imminent danger to which we had been exposed, and the providential escape we had experienced. In the vessel's bottom were two large holes that would easily admit both hands; they were now nearly choaked with tropical weed, which the force of the water rushing into her had driven in, and which had been the means of our preservation. At St. Thomas I found letters of credit on the gentleman to whom I had brought a letter of introduction from England; and I immediately with

his assistance procured the best medical advice; which, with a change of diet, soon recovered me so far as to enable me to embark without danger for England. The Traveller being obliged to undergo a thorough repair, which was not likely to be completed at this place in less than two months, I took my passage in His Majesty's Packet, Nocton, Captain M——, and bade adieu to the West Indies with the greatest satisfaction. We had a most extraordinarily good passage of only twenty-eight days, and arrived in Falmouth harbour on the 29th of June, 1819.

# CONCLUSION.

BEFORE I close this Narrative, in which it has been my object to show the contending parties in that impartial light which is consistent with truth; I beg leave to state that my incitement to offer to the public perusal a Journal of sufferings in which I was so great a sharer, was a wish in some degree to remove the ignorance and uncertainty, which on my arrival in London seemed to prevail, relative to the affairs in Spanish America, and to expose the delusions still practised by the interested agents, employed by those persons now materially concerned in the success of the Patriots of South America, who, well aware of the unprecedented misery that awaits the volunteer, still hold out to him the alluring promise of speedily accumulating a fortune and military preferment.

In the event of the success of the Republic, a British subject is to receive a grant of land *equivalent* to his arrears of pay, &c. This land will most probably be given him in a part of the country in which the natives would refuse to settle; and the person put in possession of it, would be compelled to employ a party of Indians to reside on his estate to protect him from the depredations of the savages and wild beasts. Yet still will this portion be estimated at a considerable value, and the incumbent will be liable to all the inconveniences of a separation of many leagues from a civilized settlement. As to promotion, is it not natural to imagine that the preference will be given to natives? That such is the intention is manifest beyond a doubt, from the following declaration of their Chiefs:—"We do not want officers, but men who will carry the musket, and act in obedience to those of our countrymen whom we shall be pleased to appoint to command them."

The natives already, while nothing is in their power, evince great jealousy of the British, (whom they call heretics): what then can an officer expect, when he shall demand

his promised reward, and be dependent on the smiles of these *now* ungrateful people, who, as the volunteer was led to expect, were groaning under a yoke of misery, and whom the Royalists ruled with a rod of iron? Yet what is now their situation and *great* change?

The Indians, of whom the army is principally composed, are taken from their native missions, and torn from the bosom of their families, to co-operate in the cause of freedom; of which, after all their services, they only retain the empty sound.

Those who may still entertain intentions of espousing the cause, would do well to consider, from a comparison of my last observations with the promises held out to volunteers, in case the Patriots should ultimately succeed, what will be the probable result of such enthusiasm. It will be evident on a moment's consideration, that the Republic is greatly involved, not only for supplies received from England to a serious amount, but also from speculators in the United States of America, and in the West-India Colonies; the engagements of the latter having been formed at a period when Englishmen had not yet embark-

ed fortunes in the cause. Those speculators, aware of their danger, but now too late to retreat, still assist them, in hopes that additional supplies may speedily terminate the affair in their favour, and realize their hopes. The Patriots have arms in their hands, to which they are unaccustomed, and of the use of which they are entirely ignorant. In an official and public dispatch from Morillo, that General observes, that Spain has no occasion to send arms and stores to the Royalists; as England supplies them abundantly through the medium of their enemies, who upon all occasions throw them away to facilitate their flight from a steady charge of disciplined troops.

I will conclude by saying, that although the Royalists have maintained their ground in the Caracas, with a comparatively small portion of men, yet if they do not receive some reinforcement, it is more than probable that the Independents will succeed there, and in the province of New Granada.

May my countrymen disposed to embark in this cause, reflect ere too late on the desperate condition to which they are likely

to be reduced, even should the Patriots establish their independence; and if still determined, let them above all things secure a friend and ample resources in the West Indies, of which, after obtaining their passports from the Independent service, (which are now peremptorily refused to British officers) they may avail themselves, in the emergency that they will have so much reason to apprehend.

## STAFF OF VENEZUELA.

Simon Bolivar, Supreme Chief of the Republic of Venezuela and New Granada.

S. Marino, Captain-General.

Luis Bryon, Captain-General and Admiral of the Republican Navy.

Juan Battista Arismendi, Captain-General and Commander in Chief at Margarita.

Paes, Captain-General of the Province of Varinas; commanding a division of 3500 Cavalry.

Bermudas, Major-General.

Sedeno, Major-General of Cavalry.

Urdenata, Major-General commanding the British Legion, lately sailed from Margarita.

Montillo, Major-General.

Ansuatica, Major-General and Colonel of the Rifle corps, lately commanded by Colonel Campbell.

Sarazo, Brigadier-General of Cavalry.

Monagas, Brigadier-General of Cavalry.

C. Soublette, Brigadier-General, late Adjutant-General of Infantry.

Valdes, Brigadier-General, late Governor of Angostura, now Governor of Margarita.

Torres, Brigadier-General.

Gomez, Brigadier-General of Infantry, late Governor of Margarita, relieved by Valdes, and now with the expedition under General Urdenata.

Martin, Brigadier-General of Cavalry.

English, Brigadier-General of Infantry.

Gilmore, Brigadier-General and Colonel Commandant of Artillery.

Jolie,* 2nd Admiral under Bryon.

D[illegible] and Padilla, joint Commanders of Gun-boats.

* This newly created Admiral has lately fallen under the displeasure of Bryon, who, as I was informed at St. Thomas, has sentenced him to death. Previous to my departure from Margarita he was under arrest

## *Naval Force.*

| *Names.* | *Guns.* |
|---|---|
| Ship Victoria . . . . . | 5 |
| BRIGS—Libertador . . . . | 16 |
| Arismendi . . . . | 14 |
| Bryon . . . . . | 14 |
| SCHOONERS—Spartan . . . . . | 10 |
| Brutus . . . . . | 6 and 2 pivots |
| Little Brutus . . . | 4 and 1 pivot |
| Favourite . . . . | — and 1 pivot |

*Vessels carried away by Mutiny.*

| | |
|---|---|
| SCHOONER—Condor . . . . . | 10 |
| BRIGS—Indian Libre . . . | 12 |
| Fortunatus . . . . | 12 |

Orinoco, Commodore De Roue 10 guns.

Printed by E. Howlett, 10, Frith Street, Soho.

## ERRATA.

Page 23, line 21, after *was* dele *of*.
—— 90, — 1, after *Colonels* read *and Captains*.
—— 99, — 3, of the note, for *boats* read *boat*.
——101, — 7, for *this* read *these*.
——112, — 1, of the note, for *Davy* read *Dewey*.
——124, — 5, transpose *in* to follow *return*, immediately above it.
—— 153, — 9, for *have* read *has*.
——156, — 16, omit *under*.
——161, — 19, for *appointment* read *appointments*.
——187, — 11, for *extraordinarily* read *extraordinary*.
——194, — the last, for *Commodore De Roue* read *Commodore Bouie*.

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